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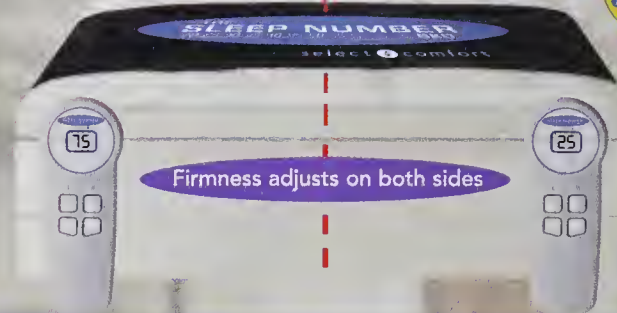
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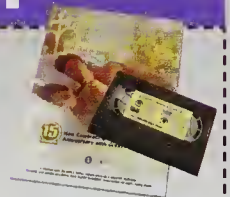
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Lindsay Wagner
Actress, Mom, Gardener

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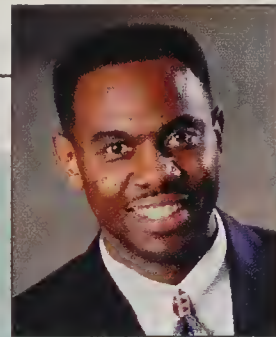
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By Curtis Wynn

Fixing the national transmission grid the cooperative way

The big outage that occurred in mid-August reminded us that virtually everyone depends on an interconnected electric power transmission system. Unless you have your own power generating source, electricity reaches you by way of a vast network that links the components of electricity production and distribution: generating plants, substations that ramp up and ramp down voltage, and power lines that carry electricity at great speeds over long distances. Operating such a complex system requires not only reliable technology, but also continuous coordination among those who own, manage and use it.

In about nine seconds on the afternoon of Aug. 14, electricity systems shut down in seven states from Michigan to New York and parts of Canada, affecting more than 10 million people. While this is a densely populated area, the outage affected everyone and all utilities, including more than 100,000 members of electric cooperatives in rural parts of the region. Even though power was safely restored within about 50 hours, calls went out immediately to find out what caused the outage and what we need to do to fix what's wrong. Because of the complexity of the grid itself, as of this writing we still don't know the cause of what happened.

Surely one recommendation will be that we in the utility business must cooperate with one another. We must come to an understanding about how we all can work together to make as reliable as possible the power delivery systems that are so vital to this nation's security. In this quest, industry, government and consumer organizations can learn something from cooperatives.

As we focus on the cooperative business model during October's "Cooperative Month," let's consider some aspects of our performance that can shed light on this summer's blackout.

Electric cooperatives nationwide follow the same standards for building and maintaining their power distribution systems. An engineer or lineman from Illinois can come here to North Carolina and understand exactly how our facilities at Roanoke Electric Cooperative are put together. Employees from cooperatives throughout the U.S. meet regularly with one another to discuss common issues about electric service. And when a massive outage occurs, co-ops send personnel and equipment to help the co-ops affected by the outage. This is only one example of the interdepend-

ence that has been the cornerstone of cooperatives since the day we were formed. Because America's transmission system crosses state and regional boundaries, the technology and operating procedures must be compatible throughout the grid. As we plan how to fix the system, we should keep in mind the need for common standards and procedures.

As the industry analyzes the grid, issues that arise include who sets standards for operating procedures, how much government regulation should be involved, and who is responsible for making the financial investment. Cooperative business practices can enlighten that discussion as well. The core mission of an electric cooperative is to provide safe, reliable, affordable electric power to the members who own the cooperative. We don't need to assure a financial profit to investors. We aren't competing against an electric service that offers bargain prices. We simply need to get the job done prudently and responsibly. When something in our distribution system begins to wear out or breaks down, we fix it immediately. As we forecast our need for power and new facilities to meet growing demand, we build our system to accommodate that growth. When a co-op member needs help controlling energy consumption, we send a specialist to help. When a new family or business moves into our service area, we connect them to the cooperative. When a job needs doing, we do it.

Upgrading and safeguarding the complex transmission grid will be expensive and time-consuming. But we all agree that it must be done. Just like in a cooperative, when we know the system needs attention, we get to work on it for the benefit of everyone.

Realistically, of course, we know that politics and competing interests will be involved as the discussion to improve the transmission network moves forward. As always, you can count on your cooperative representatives to promote solutions that will benefit all consumers.

Curtis Wynn is president of the board of North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, the power supply cooperative for the state's Touchstone Energy cooperatives. He is also CEO of Roanoke Electric Cooperative, which serves more than 14,500 members in Hertford, Bertie, Gates, Northampton, Halifax, Chowan and Perquimans counties.

Finding the Rosenwald Schools

We want to thank you for Patricia Staino's fine article, "Where Were the Rosenwald Schools?" in your July 2003 issue. Since the effort to identify North Carolina's 800-plus Rosenwald schools began last year with the assistance of volunteers from all across the state, the project has been publicized through press releases, Internet postings, and even a segment on UNC-TV's "North Carolina Now," but nothing has generated as much interest as the article in Carolina Country. The response has been tremendous—scores of phone calls, letters, and e-mail messages from people throughout the state and as far away as Brooklyn, NY. We were delighted to hear from so many people, starting in late June as soon as they received the July issue, and the calls and letters are still coming in. In fact, we have a sizeable backlog of phone messages and correspondence to which we have not yet been able to respond, but we do want to reassure your readers that we intend to get back to everyone.

So far, your readers have given us much valuable information about the location and condition of many Rosenwald schools. Several of the new contacts have joined the ranks of volunteer surveyors who have agreed to search out all of the schools in a given county. As a result of the article, it is likely that a number of newly identified Rosenwald schools will be placed on the State Historic Preservation Office's list of properties that are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The article also has prompted invitations to us to make presentations on Rosenwald schools to two electric cooperative board meetings this fall.

This wonderfully strong response shows not only how deeply people care about Rosenwald schools, but also the popularity of Carolina Country and the strength of your readership.

Claudia Brown
N. C. State Historic
Preservation Office
Raleigh

Nyoni Collins
N. C. Rosenwald Schools
Community Project
Wake Forest

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Tractors and passengers

I enjoy the Carolina Country magazine and look forward to receiving it each month. The photos in the September issue are great ["Carolina Country Life, September 2003]. As an Extension agent with North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, I did have a concern with one of those selected, and I always try to take advantage of teachable moments.

In our rural county, we do lots of education in the area of farm safety. The photo on page 12, lower left-hand corner, shows a typical farm family making some common, but dangerous mistakes that could cost one of them their life. Riding passengers on a tractor is not recommended, and it appears that this tractor does not have a Roll Over Protection System (ROPS). We conduct farm safety workshops for students and families, and the tractor roll over demonstration is always one of the ones which really makes an impact.

Carmen J. Long
N.C. Cooperative Extension, Alleghany County Center
Sparta

"Silver Linings"

We call this "Silver Linings on a Carolina Morning." My husband, Mark, took it one morning last August when our son, 5, and daughter, 7, were walking to the school bus. We call it "Silver Linings" because of my husband's experience with a brain tumor almost six years ago.

I was expecting our son any day when Mark had two severe seizures in the middle of the night. That was the first sign that he had any health problems at all. His active life-style gave no hint that a malignant brain tumor was growing inside him. Within three days of those seizures, Mark was having risky brain surgery in Winston at Baptist Hospital. Two weeks after Mark came home from the hospital, he accompanied me to the maternity ward where our son was born — our first silver lining.

Mark had a year of chemotherapy and radiation. He lost his job and some brain function, but he is so good at looking for those silver linings. There have been too many to name. One is that Mark has been able to spend more time with our two children. His schedule allows him to get them ready for school (so he could take this picture in our driveway). God does everything for a reason. When it is darkest, those silver linings are bound to be right around the next bend.

Kae Treadway
Taylorsville



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26			12.34	11.11	14.88	12.91	24.50	20.56
27			12.34	11.11	14.88	12.91	24.50	20.56
28			12.34	11.20	14.88	13.13	24.50	21.00
29			12.34	11.20	14.88	13.13	24.50	21.00
30			12.34	11.20	14.88	13.13	24.50	21.00
31			12.34	11.29	14.88	13.13	24.50	21.00
32			12.34	11.29	14.88	13.13	24.50	21.00
33			12.43	11.38	14.88	13.34	24.50	21.44
34			12.43	11.46	14.88	13.34	24.50	21.44
35			12.43	11.64	14.88	13.56	24.50	21.88
36			12.78	11.99	15.53	14.22	25.81	23.19
37			13.21	12.51	16.41	15.31	27.56	25.38
38			13.56	13.04	17.06	16.41	28.88	27.56
39			14.09	13.74	17.94	17.50	30.63	29.75
40			14.61	14.35	19.03	18.81	32.81	32.38
41			15.66	14.96	20.78	19.91	36.31	34.56
42			16.98	15.66	22.97	21.22	40.69	37.19
43			18.11	16.10	25.38	22.09	45.50	38.94
44			19.51	16.71	27.78	23.41	50.31	41.56
45			21.18	17.59	30.63	24.94	56.00	44.63
46			22.49	18.20	33.03	26.03	60.81	46.81
47			24.33	19.08	36.53	27.56	67.81	49.88
48			26.16	20.04	39.81	29.31	74.38	53.38
49			28.18	20.83	43.75	30.84	82.25	56.44
50			30.36	21.96	47.91	33.03	90.56	60.81
51			32.64	23.19	51.84	35.22	98.44	65.19
52			35.35	24.59	56.88	37.84	108.50	70.44

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15 Year Term

MONTHLY RATES

Issue Age	\$50,000		\$100,000		\$250,000		\$500,000	
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53			38.06	26.16	61.91	40.69	118.56	76.13
54			40.86	27.65	67.38	43.31	129.50	81.38
55			44.36	29.58	73.72	46.81	142.19	88.38
56			50.31	32.73	84.66	51.84	164.06	98.44
57			56.96	35.96	96.91	57.31	188.56	109.38
58			64.14	39.64	110.03	63.00	214.81	120.75
59			71.23	43.31	123.16	69.13	241.06	133.00
60			80.15	47.86	139.56	76.34	273.88	147.44
61			53.99	37.36	96.91	60.59	188.56	115.94
62			59.50	40.69	108.06	66.50	210.88	127.75
63			65.01	44.01	119.00	72.19	232.75	139.13
64			70.53	47.34	129.94	78.09	254.63	150.94
65			77.44	51.63	143.72	85.53	282.19	165.81
66			85.14	55.30	158.81	91.44	312.38	177.63
67			95.46	58.98	179.16	99.53	353.06	193.81
68			105.79	63.79	199.72	107.41	394.19	209.56
69			116.11	68.43	220.06	115.50	434.88	225.75
70			128.98	73.85	245.44	125.56	485.63	245.88
71			147.79	87.59	283.50	152.69	561.75	300.13
72			172.81	106.14	334.03	188.78	662.81	372.31
73			197.84	124.69	384.78	224.88	764.31	444.50
74			222.86	143.15	435.31	261.19	865.38	517.13
75			254.19	166.25	498.75	306.25	992.25	607.25
76			282.89	187.25	556.72	347.38	1108.19	689.50
77			321.21	215.34	634.16	402.06	1263.06	798.88
78			359.54	243.43	711.38	456.97	1417.50	908.69
79			397.86	271.60	788.81	511.88	1572.38	1018.50
80			442.84	301.44	885.72	580.56	1766.19	1155.88

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New survey finds American consumers trust co-ops more than other corporations

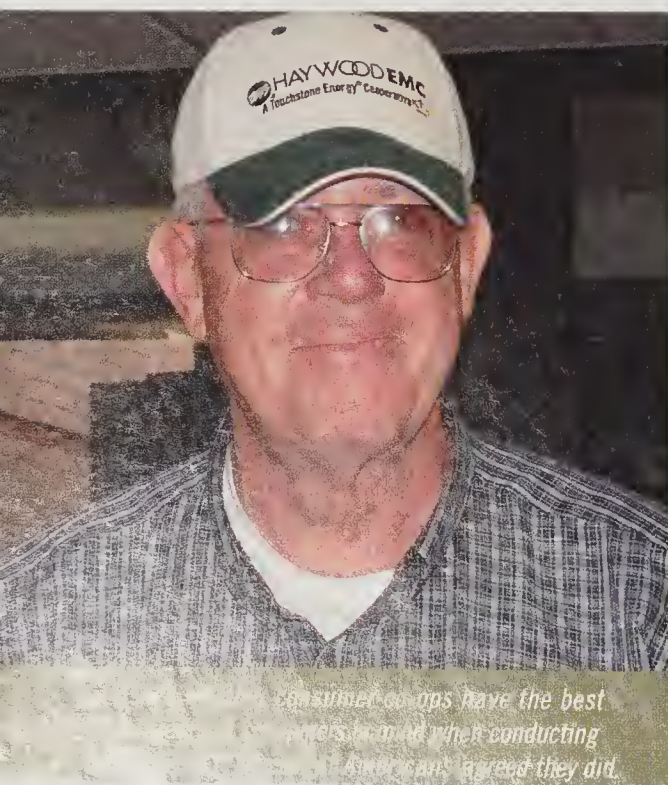
As federal regulators scrutinize corporate governance and board election practices, a new survey found the public has greater trust in businesses that provide more consumer control and board accountability.

The survey of 2,031 adults, released by the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA) and the Consumer Federation of America (CFA), found that more than two-thirds of consumers believe businesses that are owned and governed by their customers and have consumers on their boards of directors are more trustworthy than those that do not. A majority also found companies that allow customers to democratically elect the board of directors to be more trustworthy.

The survey also found that consumers rate businesses that have these structural characteristics—cooperatives—higher than publicly traded companies. Co-ops are owned and governed by their members—the people who use their services or buy their goods—rather than outside investors. And members directly elect the board of directors from within the membership.

NCBA's CEO and President Paul Hazen said that more than 75 percent of those surveyed agreed that co-ops run their businesses in a trustworthy manner compared to just 53 percent for publicly traded companies. Two-thirds agreed that consumer-owned co-ops are ethically governed, while just 45 percent said the same of publicly traded corporations.

Asked whether consumer co-ops have the best interests of



Photos by Renee Gannon

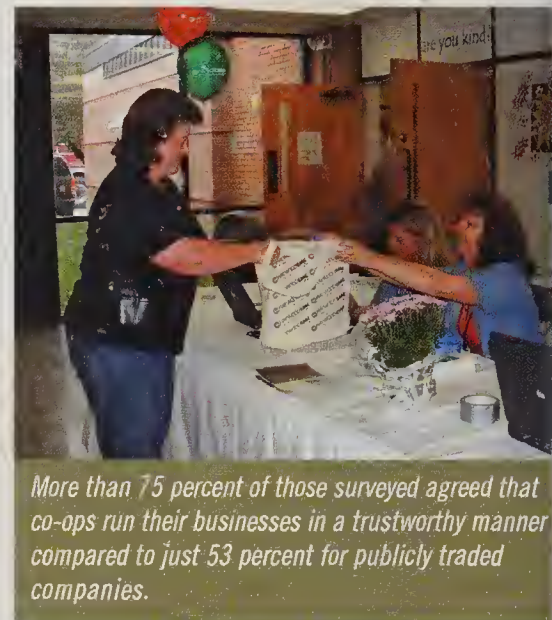
consumers in mind when conducting business, 77 percent of Americans agreed they did. Fewer than half said the same of investor-owned counterparts. Co-ops also rated higher than publicly traded companies by wide margins on questions of value, quality, price, and commitment to their communities.

"Public trust is the first casualty of corporate accountability scandals," said

CFA Executive Director Stephen Brobeck. "Fortunately, this survey demonstrates that there's a solution to consumer concern about their lack of control that goes beyond anything the Securities and Exchange Commission or Congress are willing to do. Consumers have the nation's 45,000 co-ops as more democratic and accountable alternatives to public companies."

Asked whether they would be more or less likely to buy products or services from a business if they knew it to be a cooperative:

- ♦ 73 percent were more likely to buy products from a food cooperative
- ♦ 71 percent were more likely to use a credit union
- ♦ 69 percent were more likely to patronize independent, local businesses that belonged to a buying co-op
- ♦ 69 percent were more likely to purchase food produced by a farmer-owned cooperative
- ♦ 67 percent were more likely to buy electricity and telecom services from a local utility co-op
- ♦ 56 percent were more likely to use day care services provided by a parent-owned co-op
- ♦ 55 percent were more likely to prefer health care services offered by a consumer-owned provider
- ♦ 51 percent were more likely to hold policies with a mutual insurance company



More than 75 percent of those surveyed agreed that co-ops run their businesses in a trustworthy manner compared to just 53 percent for publicly traded companies.

Hazen said consumers also demonstrated particularly strong support for farmer-owned cooperatives, with more than 80 percent agreeing these co-ops strengthen rural communities and help farmers succeed. Sixty-four percent agreed that food products produced by farmer-owned cooperatives were of higher quality than those produced by other types of companies.

Trust and preference for co-ops was even stronger among those who said they were already members of cooperatives.

"The survey demonstrates that consumers know co-ops by their reputation for their quality service and products," Hazen said. "And those who are already members of co-ops have an even stronger loyalty to, and preference for them. Regardless of how you measure it—in terms of cost savings, value or satisfaction—consumers can get more for their money at cooperatives."

Opinion Research Corporation surveyed 2,031 adults during July 24-28. At a 95 percent confidence level, the maximum expected error is plus-or-minus 2 percent. The survey was sponsored by NCBA and a coalition including CUNA, the National Assn. of Federal Credit Unions, the National Cooperative Bank, the National Milk Producer Assn., the National Rural Electric Cooperative Assn., the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative, the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, and the National Telecommunications Cooperative Assn.

WHEN IS YOUR ANNUAL MEETING?

Pee Dee EMC

Oct. 2, Hamlet
Cole Auditorium,
Richmond Community College
Registration 6 p.m.,
business meeting 7:30
(704) 694-2114

Central EMC

Oct. 3, Sanford
Dennis Wicker Civic Center
Registration 6 p.m.,
business meeting 7:30
(919) 774-4900

Surry-Yadkin EMC

Oct. 4, Dobson
Surry Central High School
Registration 8 a.m.,
business meeting 10:30
(336) 386-8241

Union Power Cooperative

Oct. 4, Wingate
Wingate University
Registration 7 a.m.,
business meeting 10:30
(704) 289-3145

Four County EMC

Oct. 6, Burgaw
Pender High School Gym
Registration 6 p.m.,
business meeting 7:30
(910) 259-2171

Lumbee River EMC

Oct. 7, Pembroke
UNC-Pembroke, Performing Arts Center
Registration 6 p.m.,
business meeting 7:30
(910) 843-2079

Rutherford EMC

Oct. 25, Lincolnton
West Lincoln High School
Registration 10 a.m.,
business meeting 11
(828) 245-1621

Facts about America's consumer-owned cooperative electric utilities

Electric cooperatives are:

- ♦ private independent electric utility businesses
- ♦ owned by the consumers they serve
- ♦ incorporated under the laws of the states in which they operate
- ♦ established to provide at-cost electric service
- ♦ governed by a board of directors elected from the membership, which sets policies and procedures that are implemented by the cooperatives' professional staff

Distribution cooperatives deliver electricity to the consumer. Generation and transmission cooperatives (G&Ts) generate and transmit electricity to distribution co-ops. North Carolina's cooperatives own the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, a G&T that supplies wholesale power to its members.

In addition to electric service, many electric co-ops are involved in community development and revitalization projects, e.g., small business development and jobs creation, improvement of water and sewer systems, and assistance in delivery of health care and educational services.

Facts at a glance

865 distribution and 65 G&T cooperatives serve:

- ♦ 36 million people in 47 states
- ♦ 15 million businesses, homes, schools, churches, farms, irrigation systems, and other establishments in 2,500 of 3,128 counties in the U.S.
- ♦ 12 percent of the nation's population

To perform their mission, electric cooperatives:

- ♦ own assets worth \$76 billion
- ♦ own and maintain 2.3 million miles, or 43 percent, of the nation's electric distribution lines, covering three quarters of the nation's landmass
- ♦ deliver approximately 10 percent of the total kilowatt-hours sold in the U.S. each year
- ♦ generate 5 percent of the total electricity produced in the U.S. each year
- ♦ employ nearly 60,000 people in the United States
- ♦ pay more than \$707 million in state and local taxes (last year of data)

Compared with other electric utilities:

- ♦ Co-ops serve an average of 6.6 consumers per mile of line and collect annual revenue of approximately \$8,500 per mile of line.
- ♦ Investor-owned utilities average 34 customers per mile of line and collect \$59,000 per mile of line.
- ♦ Publicly owned utilities, or municipals, average 44 consumers and collect \$72,000 per mile of line.

Statewide Associations

In 38 of the 47 states in which electric cooperatives operate, statewide associations provide a unified voice that speaks to the general public, regulatory bodies and state legislatures on behalf of their members. Like the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, these associations are voluntarily supported, governed by representatives of the member cooperatives and offer commonly desired services. Thirty-two statewide associations publish newspapers or magazines such as Carolina Country for co-op consumer-owners, reaching more than 7.2 million households each month.

National Representation

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) represents the national interests of cooperative electric utilities. NRECA provides legislative, legal and regulatory services; and programs in insurance, management and employee education, training, consulting, and communication. NRECA and its member cooperatives also support energy and environmental research and administer a program of technical advice and assistance in developing countries around the world.

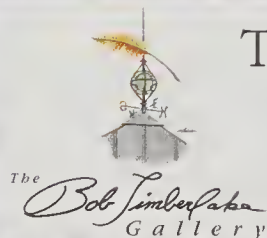


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I-95 to Exit 145, left at light and then 3/4 mile to first left!

ORDERS ACCEPTED SEPTEMBER 15TH — NOVEMBER 15, 2003



THE BOB TIMBERLAKE GALLERY

announces the release of a very special time-limited edition entitled

"WINTER PORTFOLIO"

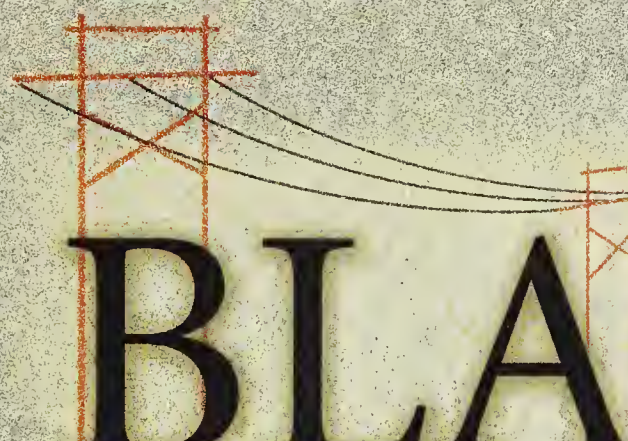
by BOB TIMBERLAKE



Offset lithography, "Winter Portfolio" features two beautiful Timberlake images "Nay's Turkeys" and "Covered Wagon".

Both reproductions have image areas of 10 3/4" x 16" on museum quality archival stock measuring 15 3/4" x 20" and are numbered as a matching set. Quality features include hand-deckled edges, debossed panels around the image as well as protective coverwraps. Both reproductions are personally hand signed by Bob Timberlake. The issue price is \$250.00 for the set plus shipping and NC sales tax when applicable. Orders taken September 15th through November 15th, 2003 with the edition size being determined at the end of the reservation period.

To order or for more information, please contact The Bob Timberlake Gallery toll free at 877-209-4285.



The BLACKOUT

of August 2003: QUESTION AND ANSWERS

What happened on August 14?

Government and industry investigators continued to study the August 14 blackout as Carolina Country went to press. Official statements by that time indicated that a series of equipment outages in the Midwest led to uncontrolled cascading outages of power transmission lines and generators serving parts of the Northeast, Midwest and Canada. These outages caused major losses of electric load affecting consumers in Michigan, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Ontario, Quebec, northern New Jersey, Massachusetts and Connecticut. Automatic protective systems operated to open circuits and shut down power plants to prevent further spread of the outages. Operators were able to restart generators and restore the transmission system methodically, so that within two days, power was restored to virtually all consumers.

Why didn't the blackout affect the Southeast?

The electric grid is designed to withstand the loss of key transmission and generation facilities and continue to operate reliably. If events occur resulting in conditions that exceed the design limits of the system, automatic safeguards are in place that should limit the problem to an isolated area, protecting the rest of the grid. While it is unclear why the events of August 14 allowed the problem to extend over such a wide area, these automatic safeguards did operate to protect equipment within the affected area and prevent the outages from spreading to an even larger area, including the Southeast.

How is the reliability of the transmission grid maintained?

The North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC), a nonprofit organization formed in response to a major blackout that occurred in 1965, is primarily responsible for ensuring that the bulk electric system in North America is reliable, adequate and secure. NERC works with all segments of the electric industry to establish and encourage compliance with rules for reliable planning and operation of the electric grid. NERC is comprised of 10 regional reliability councils that encompass virtually the entire North American electric grid. These reliability councils are responsible for ensuring that each region complies with these reliability standards.

The generation and transmission cooperative owned by North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives (North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation)—as well as the state's other electric utilities—is a member of the Southeastern Electric Reliability Council (SERC), a nonprofit organization based in Alabama that works to ensure reliable transmission of electricity to 13 states in the Southeast.

What's being done to ensure such a massive outage won't happen again?

The Department of Energy has been working jointly with NERC to investigate the events leading up to the August 14 blackout. Understanding all of the events that led to the blackout is a complex task requiring review by experts from all segments of the industry. As Carolina Country

went to press, it was too soon to determine the exact cause of the event or what additional safeguards might be needed to prevent a similar event from occurring in the future. Once the specific cause or causes are fully understood, current standards and policies will be reviewed and corrective actions taken as appropriate.

To date, the standards and operating procedures followed by regional grid systems such as SERC remain voluntary. NERC and others have called for establishing mandatory and enforceable reliability rules as a means of ensuring compliance. Some analysts have also called for stricter regulatory oversight.

In recent years, power industry stakeholders have supported the formation of entities called "regional transmission organizations" or "independent system operators," which operate independently from utilities to ensure reliability and standard operating procedures within the regional transmission grids.

Since 1996, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has allowed open access to the transmission grid for all users, regardless of who owns the physical plants, poles and wires. Use of the grid has been likened to a toll highway, where users pay fees for access to the grid. The result has been a significant increase in utilization of the grid to move power over longer distances with the effect of stressing some portions of the grid to the limits of its capability. While it is unclear that this contributed to the August 14 blackout, many analysts believe that investment in additional grid infrastructure is essential to assuring long-term reliability.

It is likely that Congress will consider the reliability of the transmission grid this fall.

What are electric cooperatives doing to help?

Cooperatives continuously maintain their distribution lines, substations and other facilities to ensure safe, reliable delivery of your electricity. Like most local electric cooperatives across the nation, North Carolina's cooperatives depend on neighboring transmission systems owned by other utilities. North Carolina's cooperatives thus have a vested interest in ensuring that transmission facilities systems are planned and operated reliably to ensure continuous service to North Carolina's customers.

The CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Glenn English, said that the August blackout shows that "we need to improve that portion of the grid that serves truly national needs." But he observed that it also "created an atmosphere ripe for political and economic opportunism" and he warned against "any premature rush to judgment." He added, "We know that the transmission system has problems. Let's learn from the experience, and develop an affordable plan to overcome the system's limits — guaranteeing that a true national grid is created."

Electric cooperatives are part of the process to develop that plan.

Information provided by the Power Supply Division of North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, the generation and transmission cooperative owned by North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives.

"I actually enjoy paying my electric bill"

And other testimonials of why you like your electric cooperative



THERE'S SOMETHING about buying electricity from a cooperative that creates a bond among its members. It's like getting your vegetables from a neighbor or child care services from your church, or like watching the local high school football team. Members tend to feel close to their cooperative — not all, but many do. New members, especially those who come from a bigger utility, warm up to the idea of owning their electricity provider. Members feel they have a stake in the business and its future and in how it operates in their community. They feel personally involved. They are more likely to be patient and understanding in tough times. They are likely to defend and protect their cooperative. They are loyal. I don't know why this is, but it's true.

Published here are selections of what North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperative members say about their co-op. They warm your heart, as Ann Doby Mercer says in one of them. Thanks to all of you who sent us your thoughts.

Our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series begins its seventh year in 2004. We like to believe that the idea of publishing your stories and pictures creates the same kind of bond that we feel for the cooperatives we belong to. It's like we're a big family. See page 14 for the 2004 themes.

— MICHAEL E.C. GERY

FOR BRIGHTENING MY LIFE

When I was a child in rural Bladen County, I studied and did loads of homework by the light of kerosene lamps. We heated bath water on the wood stove, and chipped ice from a block in the old ice box. A few lucky neighbors had gasoline-powered generators — the old "Delco Plant" — that provided electric lights which dimmed every few minutes when the generator started up. But Four County EMC changed all that.

Electric stoves, refrigerators and Maytag wringer-washers were luxuries we cherished. Due to heavy defense production at that time, long waiting lists existed for most all electrical appliances. Imagine the joy of an electric iron for all those starched shirt collars, the aroma of coffee from an electric percolator, and music from a radio whose batteries never died!

When I think back to the day that an unknown man on horseback came through the neighborhood soliciting right of way for power lines, there was no way I could have imagined the impact it would have on our daily lives. Air conditioning, televisions, microwaves and computers opened up an entirely different view of life as we knew it.

After more than 50 years as a member of Four County EMC, I am more thankful than ever for the services of our cooperative. The refund of capital credits and the "Round-up" billing program are prime examples of community involvement. But at the top of the list is excellent service during storms and power outages. When needs arise, the co-ops are there!

Edna Wray Nunnery

Benson

Four County EMC, Elizabethtown

THE ONLY BILL I ENJOY

My electric bill is the only bill I enjoy receiving and paying. Why? The all-around good service. I seldom have to go to the office, but when I do (like to purchase the members' cookbook), everyone is friendly, pleasant and glad to welcome a member.

I cannot recall the last time the power was "off," but if it has to be, we are always notified. My security light bulb burns out, of course, but it is most always replaced the day I call. The employees who answer the phone are always courteous and helpful. My home is electric, and who else would run an entire home for such a bargain price?

Thank you, Tri-County EMC in Dudley. As I stated, my electric bill is the one I enjoy receiving and paying.

Frances Taylor

Dudley

Tri-County EMC

THE FARMER'S DAY PRINCESS

The 1954 Farmer's Day Parade was approaching fast. I had been invited to ride on the Pitt & Greene EMC Float by board member Seth Barrow to represent the Lizzie community.

On parade day, Pitt & Greene entertained all of the girls at a luncheon. As we boarded the float, I was placed on the back, because I was taller than the other girls. Just as we were about to begin, I was moved to the middle seat at the front of the float. Riding on that float is one of my favorite teenage memories.

My parents taught me early in life that EMCs care about rural people. Our family was fortunate to have electricity when I was born in 1937. In 1964 when my husband and I built a new home in Lizzie, we had a choice between Pitt & Greene and another power company. There was no question as to which company we chose.

Nolah Ann (Murphrey) Dail
Snow Hill
Pitt & Greene EMC

PRAYING FOR THE EMC

I have been with Edgecombe-Martin about eight years. Sometimes I mail my statement, and sometimes I take it in person. When I go in person, everyone there at the Tarboro office is very nice and concerned. And let me tell you, that means a lot.

When there's a power outage, they are prompt about getting it back on. Their rates are very reasonable. I really have been pleased with them. I have never had a problem with them. And the Carolina Country book they send each month, I really enjoy that. It's got so many interesting things in it to read.

I pray I will always continue to stay with Edgecombe-Martin County EMC.

Patricia Whitley
Rocky Mount
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

A CO-OP THAT STANDS OUT

First and foremost, I like how Pee Dee Electric constantly strives to improve service to members, stabilizes rates, rebuilds lines and pays off cooperative debt.

Pee Dee Electric's latest "win-win" opportunity warms my heart. That was when the Sandhills Utilities Service [formed by four electric co-ops, including Pee Dee] received the bid to serve the electric distribution system at Fort Bragg, which will serve our military and country as well as benefit our members at home.

Reliability and efficiency are two more reasons I appreciate Pee Dee Electric. It took only minutes for linemen to come to our home and take care of a tree in our yard that was in danger of falling on a main power line.

Also, the Bright Ideas grant program that Pee Dee Electric offers each year provides grants to teachers for innovative classroom projects that would not otherwise be funded.

Lastly, economy is another reason I like and find Pee Dee Electric different from other utilities. The water heater and heat pump rebate program are ways all families can save money and increase the energy efficiency of appliances all year.

Ann Doby Mercer
Hamlet
Pee Dee EMC

REMC HEATS OUR TOAST

While I was growing up, we were with REA [Rural Electrification Administration]. It never occurred to me how special we were until I left home.

The first place that I had was the last residence on the "other company's" line. When I got married, we moved 100 yards away from where I worked (which I know was serviced by REA). When I called to set up service, I was told that, once again, we would be the last place on the "other company's" line.

Then the "blizzard of the century" hit in 1993. Of course there were massive power outages, and we were not excluded. We were out of power for eight miserable days. We could walk to the end of our driveway, look 100 feet to our left, and see our neighbor's house all lit up with the beautiful glow of electricity. They were out of power for six hours.

Right after this, we moved to a place serviced by Rutherford EMC. Even with all of our ice and snow storms this winter, we were not out of power. We've compromised before and regretted it. We're here to stay. We've discovered who heats the toast that we want buttered! Thank you all so much.

Noel B. Sisk
Rutherfordton
Rutherford EMC

TEACHERS, MAGAZINES, ANNUAL MEETING

We are very proud of our electric cooperative. The cooperative offers many helpful benefits to the community.

Each month we receive the magazine Carolina Country. We get to read about many important news items and events. We also get news and advertisements in the meter-reading card each month. We enjoy reading all of it.

If our electricity goes off for any reason, the workers are out to fix the problem quickly. The teachers are part of our co-op, too. At our electric co-op's annual meeting, we get to vote for our local board of directors, plus we get entertainment, a chance to win valuable prizes, and always a free gift.

We are so proud to be a part of the Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation.

Earl & Sue Jones
Pink Hill
Tri-County EMC



Hosting future members at an annual meeting.

continued on p. 14



Learning about their cooperative electric utility.

continued from p. 13

MEMBERSHIP MEANS A LOT

When you join EnergyUnited, you become one of the owners of a nonprofit electric cooperative. Each year, EnergyUnited holds a special annual meeting of its owners to bring them up to date on cooperative matters and to elect its board of directors, so they can bring up more ideas on how to make EnergyUnited a better electric cooperative for the upcoming year.

As an electric cooperative member, when you buy electricity you are doing more than just sending a check to a power company. You actually have a share in the large, interrelated system that brings electricity to your home.

Heather Orr
Sandy Ridge
EnergyUnited

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY FROM HOME FOLKS

The most likeable thing about Pee Dee Electric is the fact that in 47 years and six months we have only spent 10 days in the dark.

Our Pee Dee Electric are "home folks." Goldie Webb's only job was at Pee Dee Electric. We have gentlemen who clean out the right of way. Robert Little, who works at Pee Dee Electric in Wadesboro, has a permanent smile and pleasing disposition.

Before the 800 number came along, we would call one of the fellows at home to let him know that our power was out. They are still just as prompt, even with this new automation. Pee Dee Electric has employed people that never have a bad day, even after being up all night.

My Pee Dee Electric still has southern hospitality and dependability. They are

always there, silent, most times unacknowledged, but very much a loved part of my life.

Polly McDuffie
Hamlet
Pee Dee EMC

WHEN GIVEN THE CHOICE . . .

These days, everyone gets to choose their phone company. Before building our home in 1994, we had the rare option of choosing our power company.

We were at the very end of not one, but two power lines: one from Rutherford EMC and another from a larger electric company. Our other home was serviced by REMC, and we had noticed that we had fewer and shorter outages than our friends and neighbors served by the other company. When the REMC representative came to check, he agreed that since both lines crossed our property, we could probably be served by either. We chose REMC. They even ran us a longer-than-usual underground service to avoid overhead lines through the woods.

REMC's policy of maintaining right of ways, plus the ability of a smaller local company to respond quickly in an emergency, have paid off many times for us. In the wake of the December 2002 ice storm and an earlier one, we were out of power only for a few hours. Our next-door neighbors who were not supplied by REMC were without electricity for four days. Thanks, REMC.

Jim & Linda Bridges
Ellenboro
Rutherford EMC

Send us your best Earn \$50

Here are the themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

DECEMBER 2003

"How to Live a Long and Happy Life"

Do you know an older person who sets a good example for staying healthy and happy? Send a photo, too.

Deadline: Oct. 15

JANUARY 2004

"How I Got My Name"

First name, last name, nickname, any name.

Deadline: Nov. 15

FEBRUARY 2004

"Home Improvement Horror Stories"

That remodeling job that went crazy. Send pictures.

Deadline: Dec. 15

MARCH 2004

"My Gardening Secrets"

What have you tried that really works?

Deadline: Jan. 15

APRIL 2004

"The Camping Trip I Will Never Forget"

Where was it and what happened? Send pictures.

Deadline: Feb. 15

MAY 2004

"What We Did When the Power Went Out"

Smart — and maybe not-so-smart — ways to cope during an outage.

Deadline: March 15

JUNE 2004

"Being a Teenager Today"

What are you going through? Or: How does it compare to when you were one?

Deadline: April 15

JULY 2004

"Our Money Pit"

What was the biggest waste of money you remember?

Deadline: May 15

AUGUST 2004

"Was I Wrong?"

Lessons you learned the hard way.

Deadline: June 15

SEPTEMBER 2004

"My Favorite Photo"

North Carolina people and places. Digital ones must be 300 dpi and printable size.

Deadline: July 15

OCTOBER 2004

"If I Were Governor of North Carolina"

What would you do?

Deadline: August 15

NOVEMBER 2004

"Mama's Cooking Was Always the Best"

Send recipes, if you have one, and photos.

Deadline: Sept. 15

DECEMBER 2004

"Meeting Your Grandparents"

Something you never knew about a grandparent.

Deadline: Oct. 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less. We retain reprint rights.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
4. E-mail or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay \$50 for each submission published.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
9. Send to Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616. Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com. Or through the Web: www.carolinacountry.com



Electric cooperatives are founded and run on one premise:
everything is done for the members - the owners. Period. And because we were created not to make profits
but simply to deliver reliable electricity, the members know they can trust us.

North Carolina's
electric cooperatives



Touchstone Energy®

Man Flies

A TRUE ACCOUNT OF TAKING OFF, FLYING AND LANDING

By Michael E.C. Gery

On this 100th anniversary of the Wright Brothers work on North Carolina's Outer Banks, I figured it was my duty to fly an airplane. I hoped to feel what Orville Wright felt when he flew that heavier-than-air, motorized aircraft on Dec. 17, 1903, from a Kitty Hawk sand dune.

First of all, I should disclose that I have been a member of the "Man Will Never Fly Memorial Society Internationale" since 1990. Thanks to the late Ed North of Nags Head, this hallowed organization has steadfastly refused to believe that humans should fly. Our motto: "Birds Fly. Men Drink." We used to gather in a Nags Head barroom each December when all the usual First Flight devotees gathered some other place to celebrate the Wright Brothers. One December, during the first Gulf War, we agreed that those were not manned aircraft flying over the sands of Kuwait and Iraq. Ed North decided they were flying carpets, and the rest of us agreed.

I've seen the so-called photograph by John T. Daniels of Manteo that seems to show Wilbur Wright running alongside the contraption that they say flew that day in 1903 up to 20 feet over a distance of 120 feet in about 12 seconds. And I've read the Wrights' accounts of mosquitoes down there (those I believe). Maybe the insects themselves spurred those Ohio boys to leave the ground.

Even so, I arranged to take a flying lesson at First in Flight Aviation, based at the Franklin County Airport (LHZ). The lesson was set up for me by the Be a Pilot program (their motto: "Keep Dreaming. Start Flying.") If you're interested, you can do the same thing (see how on page 17.)

My instructor was an enthusiastic and very knowledgeable young woman named Cheri Dyson. An instructor for nearly three years, Cheri hopes to become a bush pilot, preferably in

Africa. I asked her why she flies small airplanes.

"I'd rather fly than drive," she said. "Plus, it's fun."

This was good enough for me. So we looked outside. That's the first thing you need to do: make sure the weather will let you fly. We checked the computer and radar reports from inside the airport, then looked outside the window. Cheri said "it's hazy" (which I knew already) but OK. Visibility was 5

miles. Optimum is 6, minimum is 3. We looked at the 2003 Aeronautical Chart published by the N.C. Department of Transportation to plan where we'd fly. We decided to go east toward Bunn, Spring Hope and Momeyer, places I have always wanted to see from the air.

The Cessna 172R highwing was parked right outside the little terminal, and she looked healthy. But we had to check her anyway. The preflight inspection involves running down a checklist that makes you examine just about everything in and on the aircraft, beginning with your Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) air-worthiness certificate and registration, through your cockpit switches and instruments, lights,

gauges, meters, wing flaps, tires, propeller and fuel supply. I checked the fuel tank (we burned 100 low-lead octane) and inspected the fuel itself at 13 different sump locations to make sure no one had messed with it. We looked at the engine to make sure no birds were in there. Cheri herself uses the checklist every time.

Then we climbed inside. The cockpit of this Cessna looks like the inside of a MG sports car from the 1960s. Narrow leather seats and a mass of dials right there in front of you on the panel. I was in the pilot's seat (on the left) and Cheri described what each gauge and switch does, where the throttle is, the mixture control, the attitude indicator, the directional gyro, the fuel pump switch, the yoke (steering wheel). She told



The instrument panel and dual controls of our Cessna 172R. I handled the pilot's yoke on the left (you rotate it like a steering wheel and push or pull it to dip or rise). My instructor had the controls at right, just in case.

me I would taxi us out, and handle the controls while we take off. I said, "No problem." She reminded me that she had an identical set of controls on her side of the plane. "In the event of an emergency," Cheri said seriously, "we'll land in a field, and I'll meet you at the back of the plane." I said, "No problem." We buckled our seat belts and donned headsets. Then Cheri yelled, "Clear!" She told me to turn the key to start the engine and push in the throttle until we reach about 1,000 rpm.

To taxi out on a runway, your feet work floor pedals. The tops of the two pedals are your brakes. The bottoms steer the plane's wheel left or right. That takes some practice, I can tell you. We weaved along the Franklin County Airport tarmac for a good while.

Then we let her rip, running to 1,400 rpm. Cheri checked the oil pressure, the gauges, the propeller pitch. We buzzed her to about 2,300 rpm, raised the wing flaps and pulled the yoke, rose skyward, and there we were: flying. In fact, I was doing the flying. I swung that yoke counterclockwise and the aileron flaps rotated us leftward.

"Try not to pitch us at a 90-degree angle," Cheri called to me through the headset.

This baby can do 135 miles per hour at cruising speed. We were flying over Bunn in no time. I took her south to check out the traffic on 64. Vehicles down there were crawling along at 65-70 mph in the Nashville area. Looking down, I dipped the nose too much, and Cheri had to lift us back into position.

Up there, you don't have to keep your eyes straight through the windshield. You can look down, or sideways and still keep going straight ahead. In fact you should look down and sideways pretty often.

Cheri told me to stay out of the clouds. You need a special license to fly in the clouds. It's the coveted "Instrument Rating."

"How do they know if you're flying in the clouds?" I wondered. "Who's checking?"

Cheri figured it was a wise-guy remark. Then she said, "For one thing, you don't know who else might be in there." Good point.

When the two fuel tanks are full, this Cessna can carry four people for almost six hours, or about 750 miles. You could leave from Morganton-Lenoir (MRN) at 3 p.m. and fly to Manteo-Dare County (MQI), take a swim, then have dinner at the 1587 or Clara's, and be back in Morganton by 11 p.m. or so.

We flew over Lake Royale and Louisburg and peered down on some landing strips out there, then we winged back to LHZ. Cheri radioed to a nearby pilot that we were in the vicinity. Then she radioed our intentions to LHZ: "We're going to do a touch and go." In other words, she would show me how to land the plane on a runway, then lift us back up. We'd circle, and I would land us the second time. No problem.

You know how it feels when your jumbo jet shakes and rattles as it tries to slow down on a runway? Well, landing in a single-engine Cessna is nothing like that. You let her down rear wheels first, then touch the nose wheel, then work those floor pedals and taxi in. Once you're on the ground, it's almost a let down. You feel like going back. ■



Outside the Franklin County Airport (LHZ) terminal: Flight instructor Cheri Dyson, student Michael Gery, and our Cessna 172R highwing.

To Be a Pilot

To take a \$49 introductory flying lesson, contact Be A Pilot at www.beapilot.com



or (202) 842-4099. Among more than 1,600 Be A Pilot flight schools nationwide, 55 are in North Carolina.

Here are some facts about becoming a pilot:

- 40 hours of certified instruction for a private pilot license, including 10 hours flying solo, 5 cross-country (50 miles and back), 3 with instruments, 3 at night, and 10 night take-offs and landings. Most students take at least 50 hours.
- Start learning at any age, but you need to be at least 16 to solo.
- You must pass a physical examination (20/40 vision with or without corrective lenses, good balance and hearing, no serious physical problems).
- Final test includes an oral exam and flight test with an FAA-approved examiner.
- You can complete lessons in three or four months. Instruction costs between \$4,000 and \$5,000 to get the license.
- Renting a plane (about \$100 per hour) is most common among pilots who don't need to fly all the time. Or you join a club that owns one.



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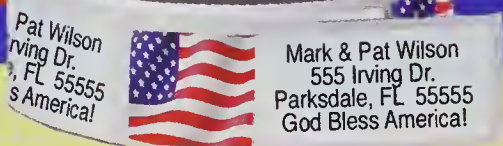
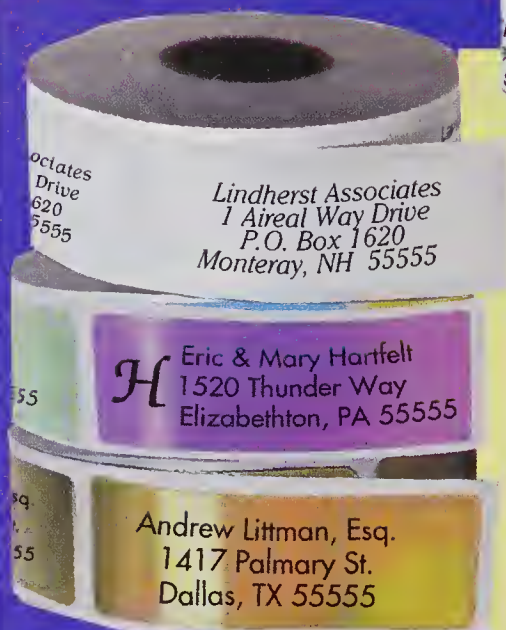
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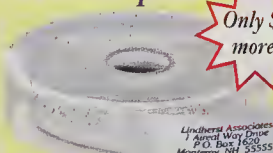
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A laptop in every lap

Greene County gives wireless computers to its middle and high school students

By Charles S. Martin

The rich and beautiful farmland of Greene County in eastern North Carolina for generations sustained community life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. But the people here know that relying on a single crop or a deeply-rooted heritage no longer promises a secure future. Even though you see signs of success in newly developed agriculture and related industries, you also see the remnants of others. Several garment factories have come and gone in the past five years. A manufacturer that makes rubber seals for oil filters anticipates its first round of layoffs late this year and probably will shut down. County officials attribute job loss to businesses moving overseas where labor is cheaper. "Low-wage traditional type industrial jobs are going to China and Mexico," says Steve Mazingo, Superintendent of Greene County Schools. Along with rising unemployment and slow-growth income levels, he said, the county is issuing lunch vouchers to more than 70 percent of its public school students whose parents barely make ends meet.

But educators have always seen in their students the hope of the future. Greene County this year has made a considerable investment in that hope.

Greene County is in the first year of a four-year lease agreement with Apple Corporation that will provide laptop computers for every middle and high school student in the county system. It is the first countywide one-on-one project of its kind in the state. Called "iTech," the program will teach students skills they can apply in the digital age. Pat McNeill was among a team of public school administrators who studied the feasibility of this technology over a span of about nine months. As director of instruction for the county school system, McNeill visited several technology institutes and determined that Apple Corporation offered a viable solution.

"Not only were they able to provide us with the hardware," McNeill said of

Apple, "but they gave us the support that we needed." Though many public school students use computers in the classroom, Greene County students will have mobility – they can take their computers wherever they go. And instead of reaching the Internet using high-speed broad band communication, they will use 80211B technology – a wireless technology that uses radio frequency to project short-range communication with a network.

The county school system is giving about 1,800 Apple iBook computers to students and 170 devices to teachers at a cost of around \$3.23 million over the four-year period. This includes software, servers and related equipment. One of the first steps this fall was to teach parents about the laptop functions as well.

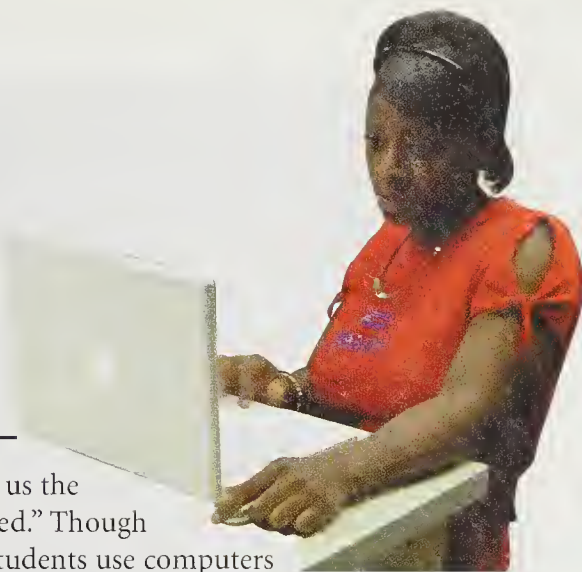
The approval came at a special joint session of the Greene County Board of Education and Greene County commissioners. "Apple did the financing and made this very attractive for us," said Steve Mazingo. "We anticipate needing new equipment at the end of the lease agreement, at which time we would extend the agreement for another three or four years. After the agreement, we have the option of purchasing the computers at a dollar a piece."

Gale Edmondson manages the iTech project, and is a respected elementary school principal in the county. She expresses with passion the need for making a difference in the lives of young people, and believes this project challenges traditional beliefs about meeting the individual needs of students. "We believe that through the deployment of individual laptop computers to every child, we will establish a new environment for teaching and learning."

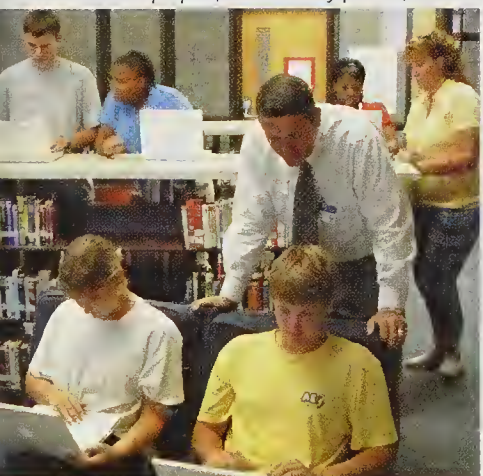
While use of wireless technology exists in larger more urban school districts, it is foreign in many rural areas across the nation. The vision of Greene County leaders is to go wireless throughout the county – upgrading the present high-speed broad band infrastructure, which they hope will generate job growth and draw high-tech business to the county. Other counties in the eastern part of the state are watching Greene County very closely, viewing it as a model as they plan to bridge the digital divide. The county, meanwhile, hopes it can develop the program so it can be replicated by other rural districts. "I don't see this for just the students," says board of education chair Pat Adams. "I see this having a ripple effect out into the community."

Greene County's iTech project manager Gale Edmondson is principal of the West Greene Elementary School. She can be reached at Greene County Public Schools, 301 Kingold Blvd., Snow Hill, NC 28580.

Charles S. Martin is a communication specialist with the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives.



Photos: Crystal Williams (top of page) with her iBook computer. (Above) Greene Central High School juniors Davis Rouse and Ada Nigoche with the school's instructional technologist Peggy Rouse. (Below) Greene Central Principal Steve Bryant with other juniors and their laptops. (Michael Gery photos)



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Making molasses in DAVIDSON COUNTY



ABOVE

Gilbert Futrell (left) gets help with this labor-intensive process from his friends (from left) Grady Berrier, Robert Berrier and Sherman Berrier.

RIGHT

A fire of pine wood slabs fuels the skimming pot. Tending the fire is Robert Berrier, a master welder who made the stainless steel skimming pot for the Futrell syrup-making operation.

BOTTOM RIGHT

Mr. Futrell feeds the Sugar Drip sugar cane into a mill to extract its juice to make the syrup. He grows the cane himself. He strip its and cuts it down before it's ready for the press. It takes him five hours to press enough cane to produce one batch of syrup.

This year he planted his sugar cane crop on June 14, later than usual due to an overabundance of rain. His molasses-making season runs through October.

BOTTOM LEFT

Sugar cane extract boils in a huge pot that holds two and a half barrels of juice. Boiling the juice removes the water from it. During the 8-hour cooking process, chlorophyll from the sugar cane rises to the top and must be constantly skimmed off and discarded. Mr. Futrell says the only additive in his molasses is "extra arm work."

You can call it molasses, but what Gilbert Futrell makes every October is actually sorghum syrup. A member of EnergyUnited who lives in Davidson County, Mr. Futrell says he's "trying to keep an old tradition alive." You can meet Mr. Futrell and watch him make molasses the weekend of Oct. 25-26 at Horse and Mule Days at Denton Farm Park. (For more about Horse and Mules Days, call (800) 458-2755 or visit www.threshers.com.) He will have molasses for sale there, too. A quart costs \$8, and he will have pints and half pints available.

For shipping information, contact Gilbert Futrell, P.O. Box 565, Denton, NC 27239.

Photos by Villa Photography



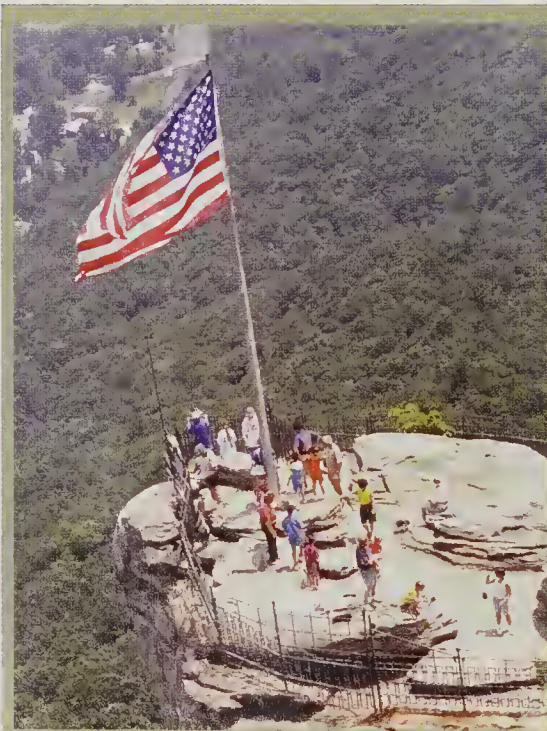
The Legends of HICKORY NUT GORGE

By Robert L. Williams

When the first inhabitants of Hickory Nut Gorge arrived centuries ago, they found a virtual paradise: beautiful mountains, wildflowers, magnificent trees, an amazing variety of animal life, streams and rivers teeming with aquatic life, and a nearly perfect climate. Today visitors can find that beauty and fascination intact. What's more, they can enjoy terrific meals, great overnight accommodations, and outdoor recreation from hiking to fishing, boating, sightseeing, photography, and river-walking along the Rocky Broad River.

The early settlers found gold, tso-lungh (a magical, legendary tobacco), legends of talking animals, the mysterious "Little People" who lived among the craggy peaks of the gorge, and an awesome mountain from which came ominous and sometimes terrifying sounds.

In time, small towns like Bat Cave, Gerton, Chimney Rock, and Lake Lure appeared, and stagecoach runs from Charlotte to Asheville became common. Historic inns like the Esmeralda Inn, the Mountain Inn, and the Lake Lure House



Chimney Rock Park attracts visitors from all over the nation and from many foreign countries. From the chimney, there is a breath-taking view of Lake Lure and portions of Hickory Nut Gorge.

Cecil B. DeMille, Mary Pickford, and William S. Hart came to Hickory Nut Gorge.

Between 1915 and 1920, more than 75 movies were filmed in Hickory Nut Gorge. Bob Cummings, star of the hit television comedy series in the 1950s, "Love That Bob," appeared in 1915 as a villain in a silent movie called, "Heart of the Blue Ridge." In the movie, Cummings, who, like Dick Clark, never seemed to grow old, dies in a fall from one of the cliffs in the gorge.

Hollywood still finds the gorge to be the perfect setting for films, and stars like Clark Gable, Kathleen Turner, Patrick Swayze, Daniel Day-Lewis, Jennifer Grey, Claude Akins, Drew Barrymore,



The new Esmeralda Inn, located in the western part of Hickory Nut, is one of the oldest stopovers in western North Carolina. It has been featured in numerous movies and provided lodging for many movie stars.

and the narrow, bumpy and rutted roads.

POPULAR FOR MOVIE-MAKING

As the world found Hickory Nut Gorge, so did movie celebrities, and political figures discovered that the gorge was the perfect spot to vacation or settle down. Famous movie director Thomas Ince, friend of Charlie Chaplin, and William Randolph Hearst, shot movies in the area. Soon moguls like John Ford, D.W. Griffith, Mack Sennett,

Madeline Stowe, and Gloria Swanson lived briefly in the Lake Lure-Chimney Rock area while filming such movies as "Dirty Dancing," "Last of the Mohicans," "My Fellow Americans," "A Breed Apart," and "FireStarter."

OTHER CELEBRITIES DRAWN TO AREA'S NATURAL BEAUTY

Other celebrities such as famed Jazz Age novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald, etiquette expert Emily Post, President Calvin Coolidge, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, famed philosopher Robert

Ingersoll, Civil War General Lew Wallace (author of "Ben-Hur"), and novelist Frances Burnett found Hickory Nut Gorge ideal for their visits. Modern novelists like Phyllis Whitney lived in Hickory Nut Gorge while she researched her novel "Star Flight" which features many notable landmarks of Hickory Nut Gorge.

Lew Wallace often engaged (and enraged) Robert Ingersoll in earnest debates concerning religion. Ingersoll, a noted atheist, attempted to refute Wallace's Christian thinking. After an evening meal at the Esmeralda Inn, the two would stand or sit in front of the inn's huge fireplace and debate, to the amusement and delight of guests there.

Frances Burnett, a native of England, was a guest at the Logan House where, according to the local stories, she was inspired by the beauty and serenity of Hickory Nut Gorge. It was there that she wrote several stories, including the short story "Esmeralda," which later became a long-running Broadway show.

FROM MURDER TO LOST GOLD: LEGENDS OF THE GORGE

The mystery of Rumbling Bald Mountain began (during modern history) in 1874 as tremors rattled dishes and broke windows. Dust, smoke and eerie sounds emanated from the rugged peak as shocks dislodged boulders inside the mountain and opened massive fissures. Residents were terrified, and even the National Speleological Society sent scientists from Washington, D.C., to investigate.

One legendary explanation for the smoke pouring from the mountain involved a mountain man and his son who fought bitterly while traveling, and never returned home. Years later, on his deathbed, the son admitted that he had killed his father, concealed the body in a mountain fissure, and burned a huge pile of brush to destroy evidence of the murder.

The mysterious Little People were part of the drama of tso-lungh, the magical tobacco plant with curative powers. According to the Cherokee legend, Dagul-Ku, the Goose, stole the sacred tobacco plant and took it to the land of Hng, where the Little People lived.

When the Cherokees tried to regain the tobacco, the Little People hurled huge rocks down upon the warriors. Then an old man magically turned himself into a giant hummingbird whose

wings dislodged enormous boulders and created a giant tornado, which swept away all of the evil spirits in Hickory Nut Gorge. Today, some people insist that when the weather is just right,

you can still see the Little People on the high cliffs of Hickory Nut Gorge.

Another story centers around a celestial battle on July 31, 1806. Mrs. Patsy Reaves reported that she and her two children had seen "a very numerous crowd of beings" atop Chimney Rock. Five years later, a husband and wife reported seeing two armies of horsemen high above the cliffs. The heavenly combatants, armed with swords, rode winged horses and slashed at each other in deadly combat. On at least three other occasions, residents reported similar sights. Many thought the

end of the world was at hand.

A more earthly legend insists that in the early 1700s, a group of Englishmen owned a gold mine on or near Round Top Mountain. The men prepared to ship their gold to Charleston, but Native Americans killed all but one of the Englishmen. The sole survivor, blinded in the attack, made his way back to England, where he attempted to draw a crude map to the mine. But to date, no one had found the lost gold mine.

VISITING THE GORGE TODAY

The visitor to Hickory Nut Gorge will discover majesty and beauty at Chimney Rock Park; Lake Lure, one of the most beautiful lakes in the nation; and shops in Bat Cave, Lake Lure, and Chimney Rock Village. The village is the home of Bubba's General Store, one of the great shops in the gorge. It is also the only shop "managed" by a beautiful golden retriever (named Bubba, of course). The John Bull Trading Company is also one of the best shops in the mountains, and next door you'll find Gale's Chimney Rock Shop. The shop is run by one of the most colorful

characters in Western North Carolina, Steve Gale.

A Touch in Time in Bat Cave is a superb shop filled with delights. Just west of Bat Cave on US 74, you can find the Manual Woodworkers and Weavers outlet, a fascinating place to shop. In addition, enjoy waterfalls, great restaurants like the Cajun Pig, and the amazing bottomless pools on the east end of the gorge.



The Bottomless Pools attraction is a favorite destination for thousands of tourists to Hickory Nut Gorge. These incredibly deep pools, included in Ripley's Believe It or Not newspaper-syndicated feature, were formed naturally.

For More Information

Chamber of Commerce

www.thehickorynutgorge.com

Chimney Rock Park

www.chimneyrockpark.com

1-800-277-9611

Lake Lure Tours

www.lakelure.com

(877) 386-4255 or (828) 625-1373

Chimney Rock Village

www.chimneyrock.org

Esmeralda Inn

www.esmeraldainn.com

(828) 625-9105

Robert L. Williams has written more than 40 books. A member of Rutherford EMC, he lives in upper Cleveland County with his wife, Elizabeth, and their son, Robert III.

Deep River Candles

This High Falls company sells more than 30 fragrant candles from its headquarters on Deep River in Moore County. Staff hand-pours the aromatic products, which contain zinc-cored wicks and pure paraffin wax inside an 8-ounce glass jar. Staff says the 8-ounce candle will burn about 40 hours. Fragrances include chocolate cream, lemon drop, cranberry, country pine, mulberry, Muscadine grape and pink grapefruit. Deep River Candle Company also sells a candle that helps eliminate smoke and odors. The company, which is served by Randolph Electric Membership Corporation, also offers special fundraiser packages. Call (910) 464-5331 or visit www.deeprivercandles.com.



Merlefest CDs

"Fresh Faces at MerleFest 2003" offers up a collection of songs by the artists who performed at the most recent Merlefest, held in Wilkesboro annually. Artists on the new CD include Hot



Rize, Sally Jones, Red Stick Ramblers, Lynn Morris, Mountain Heart and Polecat Creek. The 21-track CD is \$11.95. Also for sale is "MerleFest

Live," featuring musical collaborations from Doc Watson, Sam Bush, John Cowan, Alison Krauss, Albert Lee, Patty Loveless, Tim O'Brien, Tony Rice, Peter Rowan, Earl Scruggs and other acoustic stars. The 19-track CD is \$16.95 and is also available on DVD and VHS video. Visit www.mfstore.org or call (800) 871-2738.

Treet to eat

Carolina Treet's BBQ sauce blends vinegar, pepper, onion, paprika, garlic and other spices to make up a tangy eastern Carolina-style sauce. "Original flavor" and "Hickory Smoke flavor" sauces contain no sugar or sweeteners and no tomato products. Carolina Treet of Wilmington also sells a South Carolina-style BBQ sauce with mustard. One 18-ounce bottle is \$2.50. A pack of four 18-ounce bottles



of the same sauce or a combination of sauces is \$9.65. The family-owned company also sells a concentrated tea called Aunt Bertie's. Call (800) 616-6344 or visit www.carolinatreet.com.

Romance in Asheville

A new Web site details romantic getaways in Asheville. Covered are bed-and-breakfast inns, full service resorts, hotels,



country inns, cabins, restaurants, shopping, golf, hiking and whitewater rafting. The Web site features scenic photographs and practical advice for travelers to Asheville, including tips from locals and maps. Many of the listed outings are free, and the monthly calendar of events gives you additional ideas. You can also register at the site to win an "Ultimate Asheville Romantic Weekend" for two nights accommodations in a luxury suite at the Four Diamond Richmond Hill Inn, two dinners, tickets to the Biltmore Estate, and a gallery gift certificate. The trip is valued at \$1,500. The winner will be announced in December. Visit RomanticAsheville.com. For more Asheville information, visit www.exploreasheville.com.

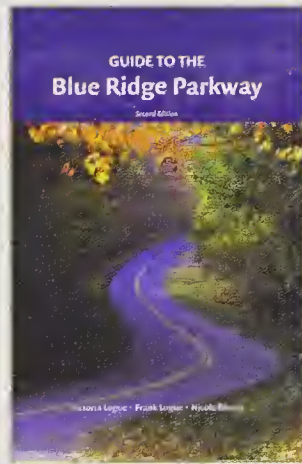
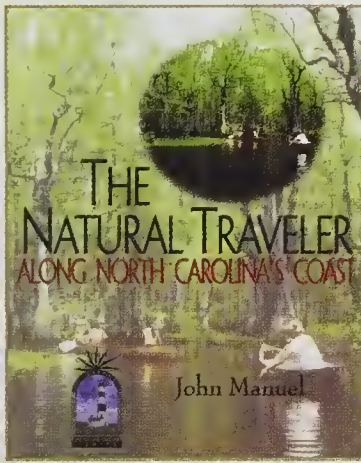
Souvenir stamps for kids

More than a dozen North Carolina businesses and locations have recently joined the TripKid Souvenir Stamp Program, agreeing to mark visitors' souvenir passports with a keepsake stamp or sticker. The souvenir stickers and stamps are free to visitors, who collect them in special passports or ordinary notebooks as reminders of past adventures. The nationwide program, developed by Game Technologies, Inc., of Clayton, has more



than 50 member attractions in eight states. Among the locations where souvenir passports are available for purchase are the Greensboro Children's Museum gift shop, the Linville Caverns gift shop and online at the Tripkid's Web site. There, other program members are listed in the Travel section, along with enrollment information and kid-oriented activities and advice. Visit www.tripkids.com or call (800) 948-9374.





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ON THE BOOKSHELF

Natural traveling

"The Natural Traveler Along North Carolina's Coast" begins with an overview of the natural history of the state's coastal plain. It goes on to describe pine savannas, open offshore waters, saltwater marshes and maritime forests in relation to hiking, canoeing, fishing, kayaking, windsurfing, birdwatching and boating. Durham author John Manuel provides detailed information about little-known attractions such as Wilmington's Sepentarium and Topsail Island's Sea Turtle Center, along with guides to restaurants, museums and lodging. Softcover, 304 pages, 50 b&w photos. \$18.95. Published by John F. Blair in Winson-Salem. Call (800) 222-9796 or visit www.blairpub.com.

Parkway guide

Just in time for leaf-peeping season, a "Guide To The Blue Ridge Parkway" is designed to be read from a car seat. The milepost book highlights attractions and destinations on the 469-mile Parkway, including cultural parks, campgrounds, trailheads and historical Appalachia. Sidebars cover topics such as the preservation of view sheds and habits of animals along the Parkway. A bloom calendar that notes flower location is also included. "Guide To The Blue Ridge Parkway" by Victoria Logue, Frank Logue and Nicole Blouin sells for \$13.95. Published by Menasha Ridge Press in Birmingham, Ala. Softcover, 154 pages, 28 full-color color photos, two full-color maps. Available in Parkway shops, you can also call (800) 243-0495 or visit www.menasharidge.com.

"Craft Heritage Trails"

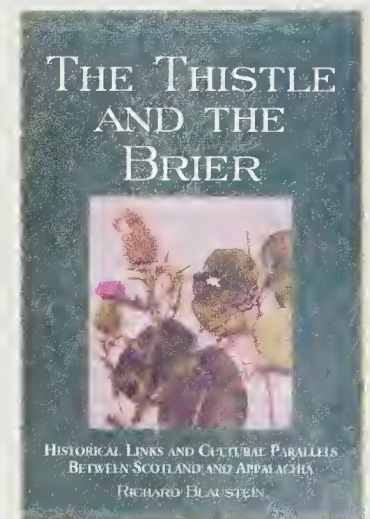
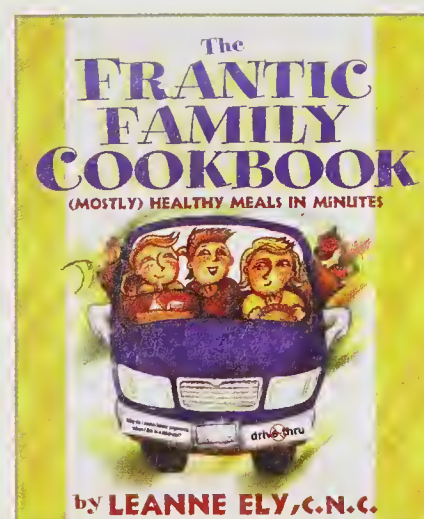
To update this recently released edition of "The Craft Heritage Trails of Western North Carolina," co-author Betty Hurst says she drove 12,000 miles through the mountains to visit studios and galleries. The third edition weaves in 200 new additions, as well as previous listings, for pottery, basketry, iron pieces, hand-made furniture, cottage crafts, painting, print making and hand carvings, along with descriptions of restaurants and places to stay. The book covers 22 counties, including one tour encircling Mount Mitchell and another that begins in Black Mountain and ends in Hendersonville. Expanded tour sections provide narrative, a route map, listings, photographs and traveler insights. More than 550 listings in all. \$19.95. Published by Handmade in America in Asheville. Call (800) 331-4154 or visit www.handmadeinamerica.org.

Feeding Busy Families

The Frantic Family Cookbook contains quick, inexpensive and mostly healthy meals for busy cooks. Armed with recipes named "Cheap-o Cassoulet," "Clean Out the Crisper Vegetable Soup," and "Son Manic Meatloaf," the book discusses soup-less casseroles and chicken "every which way" as well as cooking terms, pantry basics and time-saving kitchen tools such as the wok. Author Leanne Ely is a former member of Rutherford EMC. Published by Champion Press in Fredonia, WS. Hardcover, 164 pages. \$29.95. Call (262) 692-3897 or visit www.championpress.com

Scotland and Appalachian bonds

Scotland and Southern Appalachia have always shared a strong connection. Many of the first people to settle permanently in the Appalachian mountains came from the Scottish Highlands and were seeking religious and other freedoms. "The Thistle and the Brier: Historical Links and Cultural Parallels Between Scotland and Appalachia" explores specific links, with special attention to the revivals of folk culture, native languages and dialects in Scotland and Appalachia since the 1970s. Author Richard Blaustein, a professor of sociology and anthropology professor in Tennessee, also covers contemporary Scotland and southern Appalachia cultural movements, including identity politics. Published by McFarland & Company in Jefferson. Softcover, 182 pages, \$30. Visit www.mcfarlandpub.com or call (800) 253-2187.





“First Flight”

ART BY VANCE GARVIN

Greensboro artist Vance Garvin has issued a new Giclee print of his watercolor “First Flight.” The Giclee (a highly accurate, high resolution digital reproduction) shows several images related to the Wright Brothers experiments in flight 100 years ago, including several views of the Dec. 17, 1903, flyer, as well as the 1902 glider, a plan view of the airplane, the Outer Banks hangar and living quarters, stationery letterhead from their Ohio bike shop, the Wright Brothers Memorial monument, and Victorian design wallpaper the brothers used for writing calculations.

Signed and numbered Giclees (31 ¾ by 25 ½ inches) are available for \$450 (N.C. residents add 7 percent sales tax and \$15 shipping). A limited number of artist’s embossed Giclees (35 by 27 ⅝ inches) are also available.

For more information, contact OmniBeaux Arts, 1710 Baytree Ct., Ocean Isle Beach, N.C. 28469. Phone: (336) 682-7617. Web: www.vancegarvin.com



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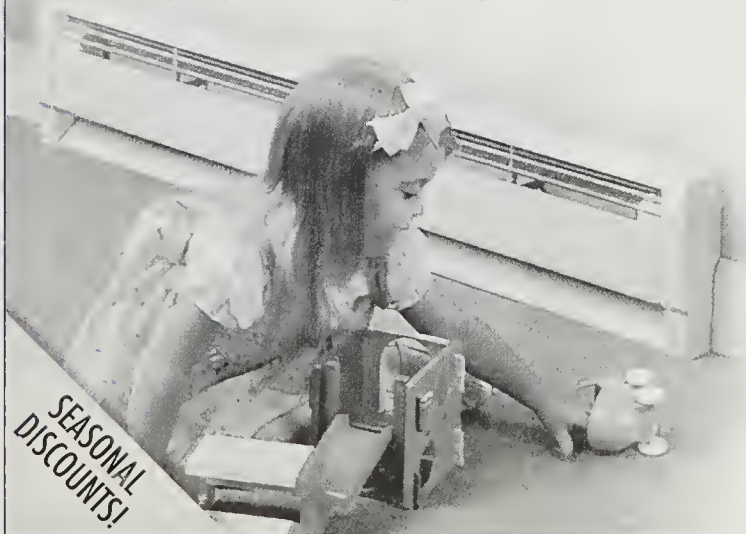
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How to avoid online "identity theft"

Personal computing advice by Reid Goldsborough

Imagine having your bank account drained, being unable to use your credit cards, and seeing your credit rating trashed. Imagine then spending hour after hour trying to clear your name and get your life back together.

Identity theft is the number one consumer complaint reported to the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel Database. An estimated 500,000-700,000 people a year become victims, says the U.S. Department of Justice.

But rest assured that by the very fact that you're reading this right now, chances are less that you'll become victimized. Identity thieves are successful against those who don't stay on top of things.

This is particularly so online, where identity thieves can have an easier time finding information about you and profiting from it, if you're not careful. The fastest-growing technique is "phishing," a practice of using "spoofed," or fake, e-mails and Web sites to trick you into revealing your Web site password, Social Security number, credit card data, and other personal information.

Typically, you receive an e-mail that appears to be from the customer service department of an Internet service provider, the online auction company eBay, or other places that you've done business. The e-mail contends there's a problem with your account and asks you to update your billing information. You're then directed to a Web site that appears to be from the same company but has actually been set up only to steal your identity.

Federal law and the laws of many states stipulate harsh penalties for

identity theft, though reports indicate that such penalties are seldom meted out. You need to cover your own assets.

Internet service provider EarthLink has been active in trying to fight the problem. It suggests these guidelines:

- > When updating information online, access the Web site through your Favorites or Bookmarks menu or by typing in its address manually. Don't follow a link in an e-mail you receive.
- > Most legitimate companies store your personal information on a secure Web page, which will be indicated by a lock symbol at the bottom of your browser window and the letters "https" in front of the page's address.
- > If in doubt, phone or e-mail the company first, using a number or address you've used before.

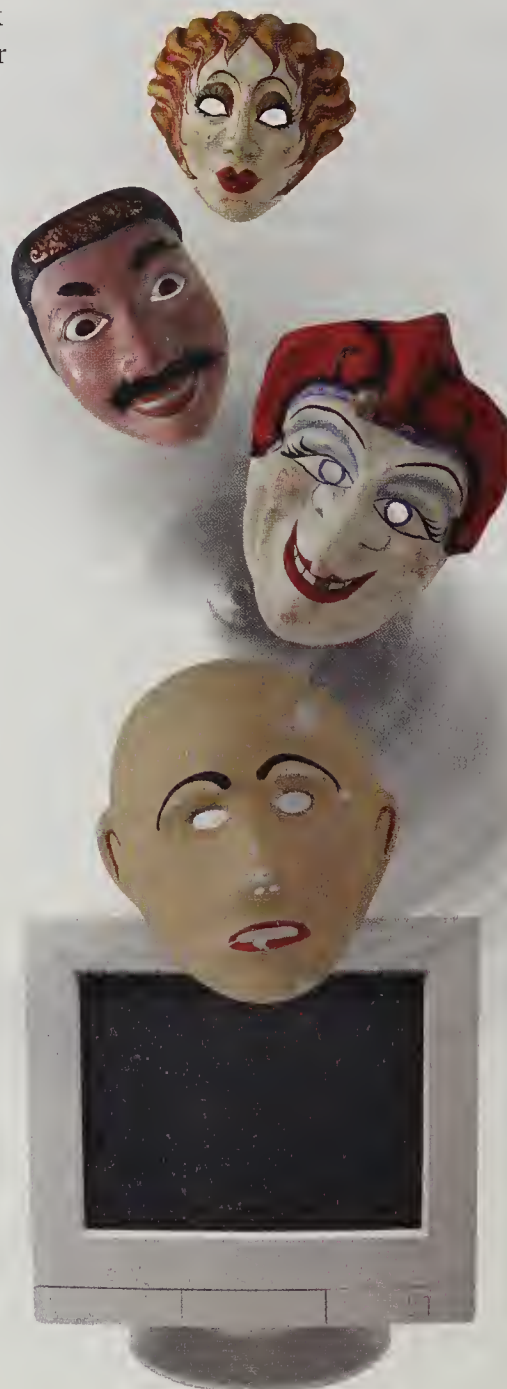
Use anti-virus software and, if you connect to the Internet using a cable or DSL modem, use firewall software. When creating passwords, make them difficult to crack — use a combination of letters and numbers. Keep up to date with Microsoft security patches. If you donate an old computer, shred sensitive files on its hard disk with a program such as the free AbsoluteShield File Shredder, at www.internet-track-eraser.com.

Identity thieves can also get information about you the old-fashioned way, sorting through a trash bin or jotting down credit card information at a store. So don't neglect low-tech safeguards, such as shredding financial statements, checking your credit-card bill every month, and reviewing your credit rating every year or so.

Two well-regarded sites for checking your own credit rating online are QSpace, at <http://qspace.iplace.com>, and TrueCredit, at www.truecredit.com.

If you do become a victim of identity theft, report it to law enforcement as soon as possible. You can use the Federal Trade Commission's toll-free number (1-877-ID-THEFT) or online complaint form.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book "Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway." He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or www.netaxs.com/~reidgold/column.



Federal Trade Commission Identity Theft

Department of Justice's Identity Theft and Fraud

Identity Theft Resource Center

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 _ w _ r _ i _ e _ w _ d _
 _ n _ d _ h _ r _ a _ a _ w _ n _ d _
 _ t _ r _ a _ o _ g _ d _

Use the capital letters below to fill in the blanks above.
 "A B E H I L O R S T U V W " means
 p o w e r a n d l i g h t



MATH words

Each letter in this division puzzle stands for a digit. Can you replace the digits that comprise the value of October?

O C T O B E R

C | B R T B R A I E

B R

T

R

B B

B U

B R

B R

A

C

B I

B I

E

E

MATCH BOXES

Match the boxes at left with the boxes below to create two multiplication problems. Solve the problems and write your answers in the box tops; then match boxes again to find hidden words in your answers.

0	1	2	3	4
V	E	N	M	T
5	6	7	8	9
C	S	L	U	A

T	A	N	T	E	S

M	C	A	C	V	U

X

N

X

N

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and verse. The teacher kept him in, saying there was no such verse in the Bible.

"When I showed it to him," Sam related later, "He said, 'Well, you didn't say it in the right spirit of reverence.'" Paul Clancy tells this story in his biography of Ervin, "Just A Country Lawyer" (1974, Indiana University Press).

answers on page 41



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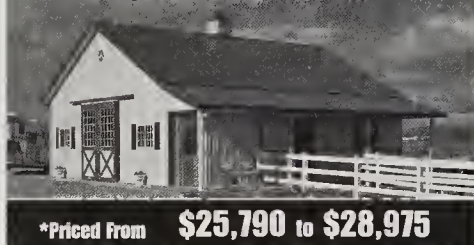
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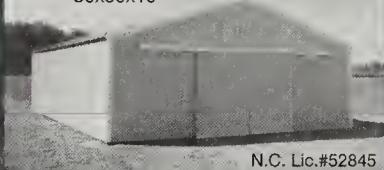
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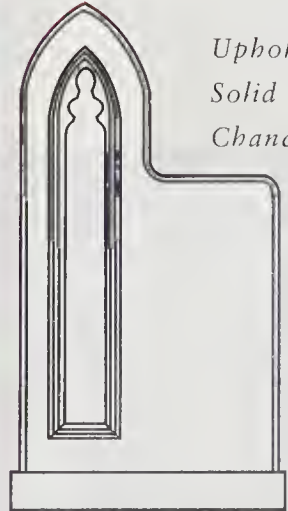
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www.ashevilleart.org

Caldwell County Heritage Museum

Ongoing. Lenoir.
(828) 758-4004.

Historical Museum

Ongoing. Kings Mountain.
Through October 13, "Athletes From Western Piedmont"
(704) 739-1019.

Cradle of Forestry

Ongoing. Brevard.
Oct. 4, Forest Festival • Oct. 11, Soapstone Ridge Hike • Oct. 11, 12, 18, 19, Foliage Walk • Oct. 24 & 25, "Legend of Tommy Hodges" •
(828) 877-3130.

PIEDMONT

(between I-77 and I-95)

"Dames at Sea"

October 1-5. Raleigh.
(919) 821-3111.
www.raleighlittletheatre.org

"Stones in his Pockets"

Oct. 1-5, 8-12. Fayetteville.
(910) 678-7186.

Fly Dance Company

Oct. 3. Mocksville.
(336) 751-3000.
www.daviearts.org

Indian Festival

Oct. 3-4. Fayetteville.
(910) 483-8442.

"The Merchant of Venice"

Oct. 2-4. High Point.
(336) 841-2273.

Antique Tractors

Oct. 3-4. Louisburg.
(919) 496-4605.

Bluegrass on Square

Oct. 5. Raleigh.
(800) 834-6276.

Auto Show

Oct 9-12. Charlotte.
(704) 364-1078.
charlotteautoshow.com

Rockapella

Oct 9. Durham.
(919) 560-3030.
www.carolinatheatre.org

Oktoberfest

Oct. 10. Mocksville.
(336) 751-7900.

Quilters Show

Oct. 10-12. Sanford.
(919) 775-7760.

Civil Rights Tour

Oct 11. Durham.
Free. (919) 682-3036.
www.preservationdurham.org

Tour de Tailwaggers

Oct. 11. Burlington.
(336) 438-2023.
www.hsaonline.org



Celebrating its twentieth anniversary in 2003, the John True Cotton Festival in Laurinburg promises to be the biggest ever. Activities for the festival, set for Saturday, Oct. 11 and Sunday, Oct. 12, include an historic horse tour, petting zoo, crafts from more than 50 vendors, food (including col-lard sandwiches), "Old Timey" games, rides on the Cotton Blossom railroad and bluegrass and gospel music. Call (910) 277-2585 or visit www.laurinburgchamber.org.

OCTOBER EVENTS

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Art Show

Oct. 11-19. Sanford.
(919) 718-1259.

Peoplefest

Oct. 11. Wadesboro.
(704) 694-5381.

Holiday Crafts

Oct. 11. Monroe.
Free. (704) 282-4685.

Wildlife Festival

Oct. 11. Gastonia.
(704) 853-5375.
www.friendsofcrowdersmountain.org

Tour & 5K Run

Oct. 11. Indian Trail
(704) 882-6267.
www.lakeparkacademy.org/5KRace.htm

Classical Indian Music

Oct. 12. Davidson.
(704) 894-2353.

"Treasure Island"

Oct. 14. Yanceyville.
(336) 694-4591.

The Commedia Cinderella

Oct. 14. Mocksville.
(336) 751-3000.
www.daviearts.org

N.C. State Fair

Oct. 17-26. Raleigh.
(919) 733-2145.
www.ncstatefair.org

Antiques & Gun Show

Oct. 17-19. Oakboro.
(704) 485-4906.
www.hinsonauction.com

N.C. & Civil War

Oct. 17-19. Dunn.
(910) 892-5507.

"Emperor's New Clothes"

Oct. 18-26. Hickory.
(828) 327-3855.
www.HCT.org

"Good Ol' Girls"

Oct. 21. Winston-Salem.
(336) 723-6320.

Frankenstein Rock Opera

Oct. 22-26. Davidson.
(704) 894-2135.



The popular Grass Cats will be performing at the Blue Grass and Hot Air Balloon Festival in Belhaven. The five-person bluegrass band hails from North Carolina and their shows feature downhome humor and tight vocal harmonies. The festival runs from Saturday, Oct. 11 through Sunday, Oct. 12 and offers arts and crafts, hayrides, children's activities and food. Call (252) 964-2399 or visit www.jawcenter.com.

Horse & Mule Days

Oct. 24-26. Denton.
(800) 458-2755.
www.threshers.com

Quilting in Valley

Oct. 24-26. Hickory.
Mahopp@bellsouth.net

Ole Mill Days

Oct. 25. Hope Mills.
(910) 424-4500.

BBQ Festival

Oct. 25. Lexington.
(336) 956-1880.
www.barbecuefestival.com

Highland Games

Oct. 25. Waxhaw.
(704) 846-4566.
www.wshg.org

BBQ & Stew

Oct. 25. Concord.
(704) 782-1811.

Homestead Evening

Oct. 25. Durham.
Free. (919) 477-5498.

Tarradiddle Tales

Oct. 27. Mocksville.
(336) 751-3000.
www.daviearts.org

Haunted Hayride

Oct. 28-30.
Fayetteville.
(910) 321-6506.

Symphony Orchestra

Oct. 30. Davidson.
(704) 894-2357.

Southmont Craft Show

Nov. 1. Southmont.
(336) 798-3537.

Marty Raybon Band

Nov. 2. Lexington.
(336) 956-2178.
www.martyraybon.com

Oakboro Regional Museum

Ongoing. Oakboro.
Ongoing. Ledbetter Ford Site.
Through Nov. 17.
"Gold Next Door"
704-485-3612.

Life and Science Museum

Ongoing. Durham.
Through Jan. 5, 2004
"Natural History Machines"
(919) 220-5429.
www.ncmls.org

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tour@duplintourism.org

www.duplintourism.org

continued on p. 36

North Carolina State Fair

The popular fair, held in Raleigh at the State Fairgrounds, is set to run Friday, Oct. 17 through Sunday, Oct. 26 this year.

The concerts offer limited free seating at Dorton Arena the day of each show. Reserved seats are \$5, and can be purchased online or at Gate 9 at the fair. For more information, (919) 733-2145 or visit www.ncstatefair.org.

Oct. 17 – Trick Pony
Oct. 18 – Foreigner's Lou Gramm
Oct. 19 – Newsong
Oct. 20 – Mike Cross
Oct. 21 – Legends Fest
Oct. 22 – Darryl Worley
Oct. 23 – Chi-lites and Delfonics
Oct. 24 – James Gregory & Etta May
Oct. 25 – Terri Clark
Oct. 26 – Brad Paisley

continued from p. 35

Granville County Historical Society Museum

Ongoing. Oxford.
 Through Dec. 24,
 "Light & Color"
 (919) 693-9706.

N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences
 Ongoing. Raleigh.
 Through Jan. 4, 2004, Titanic
 Artifacts.
 Free. (919) 733-7450.
www.naturalsciences.org

N.C. Museum of History
 Ongoing. Raleigh.
 Oct. 4, Civil Rights •
 Oct. 7, 14, Tots on Farm •
 Oct. 8, Ghost Train •
 Oct. 12, Gospel Jubilators •
 Oct. 25, Mexican Traditions •
 (919) 715-0200.
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

N.C. Museum of Art
 Ongoing. Raleigh.
 (919) 839-6262.
www.ncartmuseum.org

Chapel Hill Museum
 Ongoing. Chapel Hill.
 (919) 967-1400.
www.chapelhillmuseum.org

Ackland Art Museum
 Ongoing. Chapel Hill.
 (919) 966-7757.

Airborne Museum
 Ongoing. Fayetteville.
 Exhibit on Fort Bragg.
 (910) 483-5311.
www.asomf.org

Charlotte

Museum of History
 Ongoing. Charlotte.
 Stenciled Floorcloths
 • Basket Weaving •
 Through September
 2004, "Soldiers'
 Stories" •
 (704) 568-1774.
www.charlotte-museum.org

Mint Museum of Art
 Ongoing. Charlotte.
 Oct. 5, "Latin
 American Festival."

Through Oct. 19, Burlon Craig •
 Through Nov. 23, Jewelry •
 Through Jan. 4, 2004, "Quilt
 Classics" •
 (704) 337-2009.
www.mintmuseum.org

Discovery Place
 Ongoing. Charlotte.
 (704) 372-6261.
www.discoveryplace.org

COAST (east of I-95)

Paul Belote Art
 Through Oct. 29. Manteo.
 (252) 475-1500.
www.roanokeisland.com

"Dearly Departed"
 Oct. 2-4. New Bern.
 (252) 637-2662.

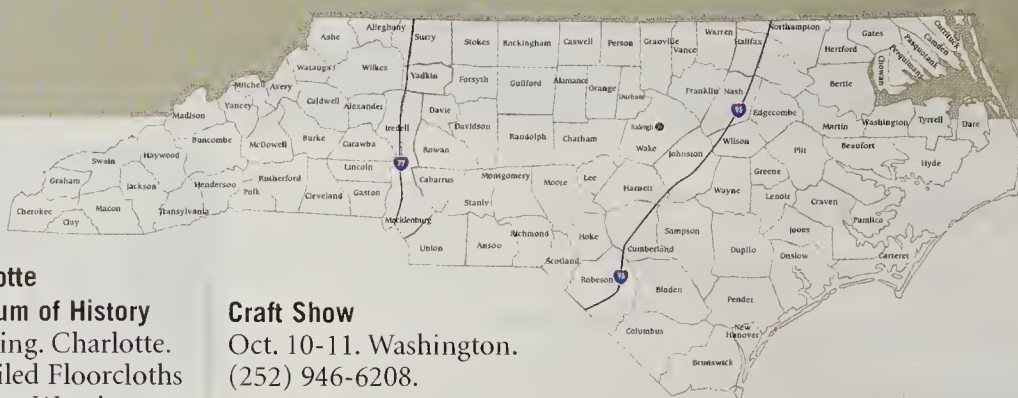
Highland Games
 Oct. 3-5. Red Springs.
 (910) 843-5000.
www.capefearscots.com

N.C. Seafood Festival
 Oct. 3-5. Morehead City.
 (252) 726-6273.

Women's Expo
 Oct. 4. Jacksonville.
 (910) 938-3546.

Peanut Festival
 Oct. 4. Edenton.
 (252) 221-4131.

MOUNTAINS PIEDMONT COAST



Craft Show
 Oct. 10-11. Washington.
 (252) 946-6208.

MumFest
 Oct. 10-12. New Bern.
 (252) 638-5781.
www.mumfest.com

Balloon/Bluegrass Fest
 Oct. 10-12. Belhaven.
 (252) 964-2399.
www.jawcenter.com

Open House Log Homes
 Oct. 10-12. Rocky Mount.
 (800) 953-5647.
www.amerlink.com

Health Expo
 Oct. 11. Williamston.
 (252) 809-6313.

Mullet Festival
 Oct. 11. Swansboro.
 (910) 353-0241.

Music Festival
 Oct. 11. Morehead City.
 (252) 728-4488.

Carolina Music Festival
 Oct. 12. Manteo.
 (252) 475-1500.

Canoe and Kayak Celebration
 Oct. 18. Edenton.
 (252) 482-3400.

Sorghum Festival
 Oct. 18. Roseboro.
 (910) 564-5069.

Ghost Walk
 Oct. 23-25. New Bern.
 (252) 638-8558.

Halloween Festival
 Oct. 24-26. Poplar Grove.
 (910) 686-9518.
www.poplargoplantation.com

Fall Celebration
 Oct. 25. Morehead City.
 (252) 808-0440.

Spook Trail
 Oct. 24-26; Oct. 30-31; Nov. 1.
 Mount Olive.
 (919) 658-2288.
www.glenwoodfarms.net

Celebrate America
 Oct. 24-25. New Bern.
 (252) 637-2662.

Kite Fest
 Oct. 25-26. Atlantic Beach.
 (252) 247-7011.

Borromeo String Quartet
 Oct. 27. Oriental.
 (249) 249-3362.
www.pamlicomusic.org

Kenneth Templeton Art
 Through Nov. 25. Manteo.
 (252) 475-1500.

Cape Fear Museum
 Ongoing. Wilmington.
 (910) 341-4350.
www.capefearmuseum.com

Core Sound Waterfowl Museum
 Ongoing. Harkers Island.
 (252) 728-1500.
www.coresound.com

LISTING INFORMATION

Deadline for November: September 25 | Deadline for December: October 25

Submit Listings Online

Visit "See NC" at www.carolinacountry.com to add your event to both the magazine and our Web site.

Or Submit Listings by Mail, Fax or E-mail

Please include title, date(s), location, phone number and/or Web site url. Photos (300 dpi or hard copies) are welcome. Send notices to: Carolina Compass, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611 | Fax: (919) 878-3970 | e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com

Odd But True in North Carolina



"Devil's Tramping Ground"

It's an area in southwestern Chatham County, a barren circle where nothing has grown for hundreds of years. Located outside Siler City off NC 902, the Devil's Tramping Ground is an unsolved mystery. No plants can live inside it. Local residents claim that sticks, twine, even heavy barbells left at night in the odd ring disappear by morning. A recent study by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture showed the dirt within the circle to be sterile of any living organism. The 40-foot eerie area has scientists stumped.

"Brown Mountain Lights"

The Brown Mountain Lights, which have puzzled folks since the lights were first recorded in 1771. The mysterious lights appear irregularly over Brown Mountain, located on the border of Burke and Caldwell counties. Visible at a distance, the lights vanish as one climbs the mountain. Sometimes they sport a red or blue cast, and can be seen as far away as Blowing Rock and the Yonahlosse trail over Grandfather Mountain, some 15 miles away. The U.S. Geological Survey investigated in 1913 and concluded that the lights were from a locomotive's headlights. But in 1916, when a flood knocked out the railroad bridges and roads, the lights were still seen. The Survey's second report then said the ghostly lights were due to marsh gases. The problem: there are no marshy areas on Brown Mountain. Scientists have speculated that the lights are an atmospheric mirage, reflecting lights from Hickory and Lenoir. However, the lights were clearly seen before electricity was used to produce light. There were even theories that the lights were reflections of moonshine stills or the spirits of long-gone Indian warriors. A provable explanation has never been found.



L.E.M.U.R. Paranormal Investigations/Brian Irish

Make Up Your Own Spooky Tale

Choose a starting sentence below, and complete your own original tale in 100-200 words. Use your imagination and plenty of descriptive terms! Examples of colorful adjectives include dank, lumpy, chilly, wailing, kindly, heroic, plucky and grinning.

#1 IT WAS DARK AND WE WERE LATE GETTING HOME. WALKING QUICKLY BY AN OLD SHACK, WE WERE STARTLED WHEN WE HEARD...

#2 I WAS HOME ALONE WHEN THE LIGHTS FLASHED OUT. SUDDENLY I FELT SOMETHING ODD, SOMETHING SOFT AND FURRY...

#3 IT WAS RIGHT AT MIDNIGHT WHEN I HEARD THE STRANGE NOISE. THUMP, THUMP, THUMP. I GRABBED THE FLASHLIGHT AND SAW...

Surf it!

This site includes links for North Carolina haunted houses, ghost tales and general folklore. www.geocities.com/Athens/Rhodes/6470/resources.html

This site discusses history of Brown Mountain Lights. <http://www.BrownMountainLights.com>

We'd like to hear from you! If you have suggestions or comments about our bimonthly page, Tar Heel Lessons, email Carolina.country@ncemcs.com, write Carolina Country Tar Heel Lessons, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611, or call (800) 662-8835, ext 3036.

AMAZING OOZE

INGREDIENTS

1 cup cornstarch
1-2 drops food coloring (blue or orange are good for Halloween)
1/2 cup water

EQUIPMENT

Newspapers
Measuring cup
Large bowl

HOW TO MAKE

Cover your work area with newspapers. Put cornstarch in large bowl. Add one to two drops of food coloring. Add water slowly, mixing the cornstarch until it is wet. Keep slowly adding water until this mixture looks like a liquid when you stir it slowly.

The ooze is about right when it won't splash out of the bowl. Tap it lightly with your finger or spoon. If the mixture is too wet, add more cornstarch. If it too dry, add more water. Try to pick up the resulting "liquid." It should feel solid until you open your hand and then, whoooooaa, it slips right through your fingers!

Classroom chuckles

What is Count Dracula's fave coffee?

De-coffin-ated!

Why can't ghosts lie?

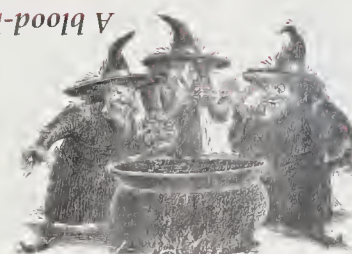
People can see right through them!

What are witches' favorite subject at school?

Spelling!

What is a vampire's favorite dog?

A blood-hound!



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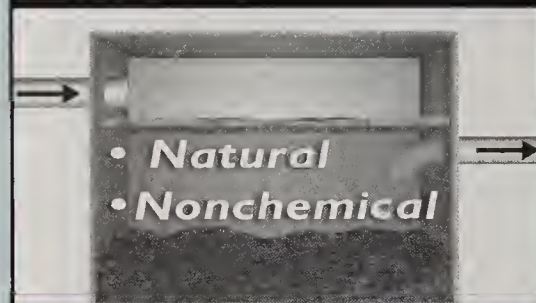


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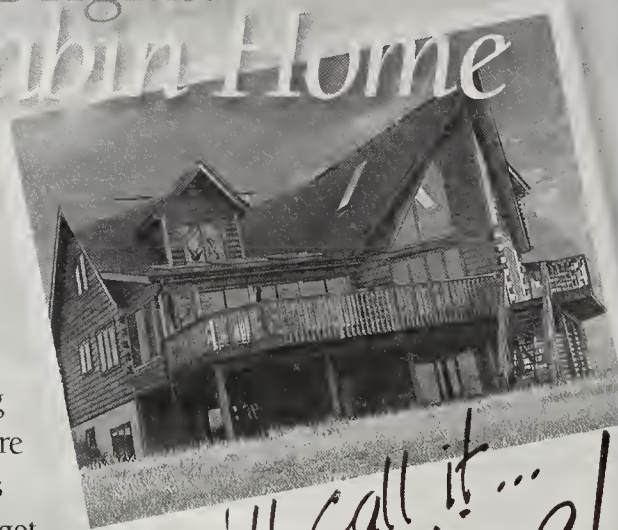
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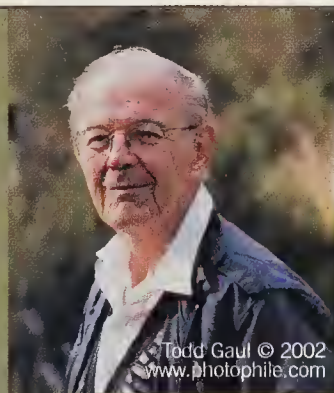


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GARDENING FOCUS

Pine Needles in Compost

A popular addition to the compost pile, pine needles can cause a problem if the soil is already excessively acid. A little lime added to the compost will correct this. Among good materials to add to the compost pile are leafy bits from the kitchen, such as cabbage and lettuce leaves. Broadleaf prunings of evergreens make good additions. Care should be taken not to add weeds, which may contain seed. Some hardy weeds can have root systems that will overwinter in the pile.

For more October gardening advice, go to the "Carolina Gardens" section of www.carolinacountry.com

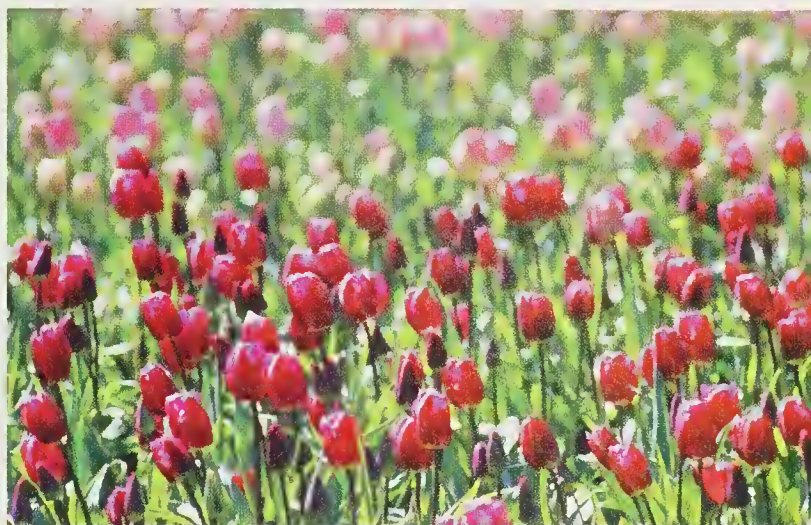
With October's arrival, winter hides behind colorful leaves of sugar maple trees and awaits low temperatures when it can creep into the landscape. Insect and disease control is most effective if practiced throughout the year. Evergreens can be pruned now, or delayed until spring. Houseplants take high priority for indoor decorative accents.

Plant Tulips For Spring

If not purchased locally, or ordered from mail-order bulb companies, make sure tulip bulbs are still on hand for late October or early November planting outdoors. Early flowering varieties force more readily than Darwin and Breeder types but most varieties can be forced with a fair degree of success under favorable conditions. New species include: Queen of Night (rare, velvety, deep maroon black blooms on sturdy stems; long lasting); Sancerre (oval-shaped, soft golden blooms six inches in height; long lasting); Hollandia (blood red color accent, attention-getting, long lasting); The Ice Princess (majestic, pointed, ivory-white blooms with creamy flame accent, long lasting); and Passionale (deep purple-lilac 5-inch blooms, an excellent contrast to The Ice Princess). Keep bulbs in a cool, dark place until planting time.

African Violets Brighten Winter

Gaining in popularity each year, these natives of the Tanganika region are at home as indoor garden plants. Like all indoor plants, they can suffer from over-or-underwatering, insufficient light, insect and disease pests, and fluctuating temperatures. Spotted leaves can appear if water is poured over leaves, or plants are watered with cold (tap) water. Water by applying to soil in the pot. Too much water can cause root rot. Let soil dry out before adding water. Curled leaves usually are caused by fertilizer salts building up on the pot's rim, chemically burning the tender foliage and



There are many new tulips available on the market. Plant them in late October and early November for spring color.

causing the curling. Flower bud drop can be caused by dry conditions. Low temperatures can cause this problem. Scraggly growth or leaves that are elongated or "stretched out" indicates too little light. When a plant becomes lopsided, the cause usually is not enough even light over the plant. Turn any floppy leaves to the light. When growing a large collection of African Violets, it is advisable to invest in a fluorescent lamp.

Fall Brings Blooming Mums

Longer nights and shorter days signal mums to begin blooming. Bud development starts when plants are exposed to no more than 13 hours of daylight. At least a month prior to the desired bloom date, begin shading plants with dark cloth or black plastic several hours before sundown to give them at least 12 hours of darkness. Remove the covering each morning. Actual blooming time depends on the variety. Commercially greenhouse-grown mums are covered with black cloth, which is supported on frames above the plants. As a result, florists carry mums throughout the year. Large blooms of "Football Mums" need to have all side flower buds removed from the stem, leaving only the one bud to develop. During windy periods, plants should be supported by tying them to sturdy stakes.

HORT shorts

✂ Control nematodes that have attacked trees and shrubs. Apply a nematocide. Repeat the application as needed and closely follow the container directions. Make close checks for problems after spring growth appears. Fall and winter are the best times for moving established plants that need relocating.

✂ A recent study shows that gardening reduces depression, and increases satisfaction in everyday living. UNC researchers found that many gardeners use the activity as a social outlet.

✂ Apply an extra layer of mulch such as pine straw or pine bark to newly planted trees and shrubs. This reduces evaporation,

helps roots adjust, and slows down weed growth in the spring. Dig the planting holes at least twice as wide as the container you bought the plant in – but no deeper. Always lift the plant by the root ball or container – not the trunk. In preparing soil to fill around newly planted trees and shrubs, a good mixture is roughly

equal parts potting soil, sphagnum peat moss, and composted manure. Fresh manure can burn tender emerging roots in the spring.

✂ In addition to trees and shrubs, fall is the best time for planting perennials and roses.

Block windows offer security, decorative appeal

By James Dulley

Glass or plastic block windows for residential use have come a long way in terms of energy installation and energy efficiency. They are more secure than standard windows against break-ins and thieves seldom even attempt to enter through a block window. The energy efficiency of some designs surpasses standard double-pane windows. And homeowners like to use them as attractive interior accents.

"Glass block" window has become a generic term for block windows made of either glass or acrylic plastic. People often think that block windows are a solid block of glass or plastic when, in fact, the majority are hollow. There are some solid glass block windows for high security, but they are expensive and very heavy.

In addition to being lighter weight, hollow blocks improve the energy efficiency just as the air gap does for standard double-pane thermal window glass. When two hollow glass block halves are fused together under heat, the air inside them contracts as it cools.

This creates a partial vacuum to increase the insulation level. Acrylic

block window halves are not fused under heat when they are assembled, so the partial vacuum is not created. To improve their energy efficiency, some solar plastic blocks have a microscopically thin layer of metal atoms deposited on one inside surface. This coating, similar to a low-e coating on standard windows, reduces the sun's heat flow through it during the summer. This also helps keep heat indoors during the winter.

Some block window designs offer the option of ventilation for efficient cooling and for exiting during emergen-

cies. Keep in mind that each room in your home should have a window that will open wide enough for someone to escape through it.

One ventilation option is using casement or hopper plastic block windows that crank open like ordinary windows. Since plastics are less dense than glass, these windows often weigh less than standard double-pane glass windows. Most glass blocks are too heavy to be used for windows that open. The frame and hardware would not support the weight.



Block windows now come in various angles and can be clear or frosted for privacy.

Several companies produce hinged hopper-style window panels that replace several of the glass blocks in the center of a window. These use double-pane polycarbonate plastic (bullet-proof glass). For security, its impact strength is more than 100 times greater than glass. If this is the only window in a room, select a model in which the entire pane can be removed from indoors for a rapid emergency exit.

Glass or plastic block windows function as natural shades to block the intense direct sun's rays during the summer. This is particularly true of block windows with real mortar or other tinted sealant between the blocks. When the sun shines down from a steep angle, as it does during the summer, the horizontal mortar joints between the blocks act as a louvered shade.

There are several options for installing block windows. The simplest method is to buy complete glass or plastic block windows in a vinyl or insulated frame. The plastic ones, because of their light weight, can be installed with simple nailing fins similar to standard windows.

There are many standard sizes of block window frames available. If you are trying to fit an existing opening, custom sizes can be made to within one-quarter inch of your window opening. During assembly at the factory, various size blocks are selected and slightly adjusted to the requested size of the frame material.

When installing individual blocks, kits are available to stabilize and space the blocks. One method uses spacers that fit between the corners of adjacent blocks. When the mortar is set, the spacer ends are snapped off and hidden with a little finishing mortar. Another installation kit uses tracks and clear sealant between the blocks. These kits include everything needed and are ideal for the do-it-yourselfer.

Interior, decorative blocks walls can be a stunning addition to any home. There are many patterns, angles and colors that can provide a range of options — from a clear view to total privacy. Homeowners may want to use a combination of glass and plastic blocks because they look and feel almost identical.

Block walls offer the possibility of using natural lighting in interior rooms because the light from a window will pass through them. An attractive touch is to install efficient fiber optic lighting in the joints between them so the blocks themselves appear to glow.

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Write for (instantly download www.dulley.com) Update Bulletin No. 497 — buyer's guide of nine efficient designer glass/plastic blocks and do-it-yourself window kit manufacturers listing sizes, colors, patterns, features, prices, and installation instructions.

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Brunswick County hosts its 23rd North Carolina Oyster Festival on Oct. 18-19 at Ocean Isle Beach. These recipes come from the "Saltwater Sensations," the festival's official cookbook published by the Brunswick Chamber of Commerce. The book contains 400 recipes from local families and restaurants, plus seafood preparation tips. It's printed in a 3-ring binder. To get a copy of "Saltwater Sensations," send \$25 (including tax and shipping) to Saltwater Sensations Cookbook, Brunswick County Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 1185, Shallotte, NC 28459. Or call (800) 426-6644. Web site: www.brunswickcountychamber.org.

Sesame Encrusted Tuna Filets With Wasabi Mayonnaise

(from Morrey Thomas, The Brunswick Beacon)

2 fresh tuna filets, 6-8 ounces each

Marinade:

Juice from 1 fresh lime

½ cup teriyaki sauce

½ cup sesame seeds

1 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 tablespoon olive oil

Wasabi Mayonnaise:

½ cup prepared mayonnaise

1 tablespoon lemon juice or rice wine vinegar

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1½ teaspoon wasabi powder (in the grocery's ethnic foods aisle)

Prepare the wasabi mayonnaise ahead of time so it can develop its full flavor. Mix the mayonnaise, lemon juice (or rice vinegar) and soy sauce. When blended well, add the wasabi powder and blend. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Marinade tuna filets in the teriyaki and lime juice for 30 minutes. Remove filets from marinade and drain. Mix black pepper and sesame seeds on large plate. Drizzle olive oil on filets, then mash filets firmly on the sesame seed and black pepper mixture to form a crust. Flip and do the same to the other side of the tuna. Heat cast iron skillet on very high heat. The pan can be lightly sprayed with Pam if desired but not necessary since the sesame seeds will prevent the fish from sticking. Tuna is most flavorful when rare inside so cooking time is short, only 2 to 3 minutes on each side. The seeds will blacken on the outside giving a wonderful nutty flavor. Remove to a serving plate and spoon warmed wasabi mayo over the filets.

Hushpuppies

2 cups waterground cornmeal

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup baking soda

1 cup baking powder

1 cup salt

3 cups finely diced onions

1 cup milk

1 cup oil

hot fat

Combine first four ingredients; add onion and mix with buttermilk. Stir in egg. Drop by spoonful into hot, deep fat and fry until golden brown. The fat must not be too hot or the hushpuppy too large, or they will not cook through.

Crab Elegance

(from Ruth Ann Keener)



1½ to 2 cups crab meat

¼ cup butter

2 tablespoon flour

1 teaspoon paprika

½ cup dry white wine

1 cup light cream (Half and Half is OK)

½ cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

salt and pepper to taste

fresh mushrooms, sliced, reserving a few caps to garnish each shell

3 tablespoons butter

3-4 tablespoons Parmesan cheese

In heavy skillet or sauce pan, make white sauce with flour, butter, paprika, white wine and cream. Blend in cheese, salt and pepper. Fold in carefully picked crab meat. Saute mushrooms in butter and add to crab mixture, saving caps. Divide into cooking shells or ramekins. Top with mushroom caps, sprinkle with Parmesan. Place under broiler until bubbly.

Stars New England Clam Chowder

(from Tom Eddings, Stars Waterfront Café)

1 tablespoon minced garlic

1 cup diced white onion

½ cup diced green pepper

½ cup diced red pepper

1 pound diced smoked bacon

½ cup diced green onions

3 cans chopped clams (1 pound)

4 small bottles clam juice

¼ pound butter

1 quart heavy cream

2 cups diced white potatoes

½ cup diced celery

3 bay leaves

salt and pepper to taste

½ teaspoon cayenne

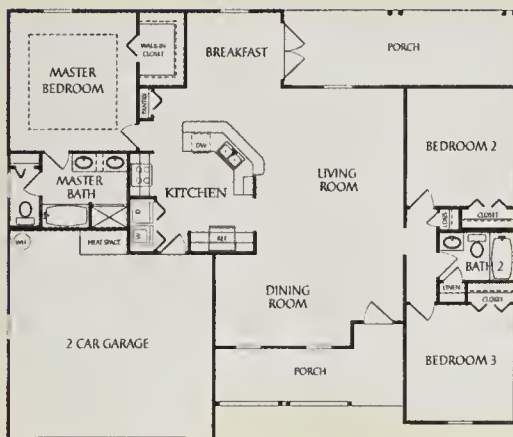
In a large pot, braise bacon; add butter, onions and garlic. Add peppers, celery and chopped clams. Cook together 5 minutes on medium heat (stirring continuously). Add clam juice, bay leaves, salt & pepper to taste. Reduce for 10 minutes; add heavy cream, reduce for 10 more minutes. Add potatoes and cayenne; reduce 10 more minutes. Dissolve ¼ cup cornstarch in water and add to soup; let thicken. Let soup rest with heat off for 15 minutes before serving.

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